

God, Babies, and Life

Once a year it seems proper to stop our normal preaching cycle and routine and for us to ask the question: what does God's *Word* have to say about the most heated and controversial debate alive in our society today: **abortion**. And if you think this *isn't* a question to be preached about, if you think that this issue is too political, just consider this: if it turns out, the Bible *does* say that abortion is wrong, that it is not only wrong but classified as murder, if God has told us that as his people, then that means we are responsible for that! We don't really have a choice folks. It's unfortunate that the issue *is so politically divided*, but that cannot be allowed to prevent us from thinking biblically, as God's people, about this issue. We desperately need to see what God has said about this debate.

This very morning, abortion, *not the war, not the financial melt-down, not healthcare*, but **abortion** is the most devastating issue in the United States of America. So, we're going to discuss the issues surrounding abortion, to look at what the Bible would say to us as our ultimate authority, and then finally draw some conclusions.

Just to be clear, we're focusing on what the Bible says. There are many other good ways to think and reason about abortion. We could look at the stages of pregnancy and talk about how early the heart starts beating (around 18-25 days). We could look at many similar arguments. We could look at inconsistencies in our legislation like the Fetal Homicide Law where a person can be charged with two counts of murder when they kill a woman and her child in the womb. But for our purposes, we're just going to focus on what the Bible says about this issue.

- 1) In thinking biblically about the issue of abortion, of course, there is only one place to start. Genesis 1:27.
 - a) Clearly man is made in God's image. Not just Adam, but all men. We are fashioned and created in the likeness and image of God himself.
 - b) Now what exactly it *means* to be in the image of God, we'll save that for a different sermon. But no matter what *exactly* imaging God looks like, the fact *that* humans and humans alone in all of creation are in his image has huge implications on the rest of our life and society.
- 2) Turn to Genesis 9:6. What exactly does being in the image of God mean for our current issue.
 - a) Why is it wrong to kill another human? It's not wrong to kill animals or plants. In fact, God commands, at various times, that man do both. But, killing a human, that is something altogether different! Why? What makes man different from the beasts? What makes killing a chicken *dinner* and killing your neighbor *murder*?
 - b) The answer is right here, verse 6. The reason you can't kill another human is because that human is made in God's image. The beast is not. So being in the image of God gives man-kind a special status among everything that is made.
- 3) We could also look at James 3:9 which tells us we shouldn't speak bad things about our neighbor because they too are created in the image of God. You can yell at your dog, but you cannot hate your neighbor. Why? Because when it comes to mankind, the man or woman you are cursing is made in the image of God! It's like *stomping on a picture of God!*

- b) So whenever a creature has the status of being in the image of God, we are no longer free to hurt it, damage it, speak cruelly to it, and certainly not to take the life out of it. Once it is *in the image of God*, it is not a possession or an animal or an organism, it now immediately has to be treated with the honor that belongs to the image of God.

Now what we have said so far is absolutely foundational, but it probably hasn't really answered any questions. The *main question* now is this: is what is growing inside an expecting mother's womb a human being as we've been talking about above, a person, a male or female *created in the image of God*? If it is, then what we've just said must apply, not just to you and me, but also to the *baby in the womb*, to the embryo after conception. Do you see, ***this is the question!*** This must STAY the question!

In this debate, you can never answer questions until you answer this question. Those who support abortion regularly try to side-track the issue. They think that you can answer this question by asking *other* questions. So whenever you get to this question, instead of saying "Yes, it's a human being," or "No, it's not a human being." Instead of answering that question, usually they start asking a bunch of "what-about" kinds of questions. Like, "Well, what about rape? What about families who are poor? What about a woman's right to choose? What about a woman's right to have a perfectly healthy baby? What about a mother's right to have a baby with a husband?"

And without noticing, we've just lost sight of the one question that renders all the other questions meaningless. When I am speaking with someone about this now, I just say, "Look, for the sake of argument, let's say I agree with you on *every other single point*. Let's say you and I agree that women should have rights, that rape is horrible and despicable, that families should be able to support their newborn children, let's say we completely agree on *every other question*. Now, let's get back to this first question: Is it a human life or is it not? Because if it is, then all of those things don't matter. If it *is*, then put up all of the "what-about's" you like, but now we're talking about murder.

So, before we get any further, let's just ask the Bible the next and only proper question: Bible, does a baby in the womb qualify as being a human created in the image of God, and thus does God demand the honor and protection and preservation of its life?

- 5) There are several answers to that in the Bible. We'll start with the less profound and work up.
 - a) Is an embryo and then a fetus, is that a living, God-imaging human being? First, know that both the Old and New Testaments use just one word to refer to a baby, regardless of whether it's born or still in the womb. So they considered the baby *before birth* and the baby *after birth* as one and the same. It didn't matter where it was, it was still a baby!
 - b) Second, Luke 1:41. Now, do we want to believe the Bible or do we not? John the Baptist LEEPS inside Elizabeth's womb. Why does he leap? Well the obvious answer is because he heard the voice of Mary. This is something miraculous going on here, but John heard the voice of the mother of his Lord and he rejoiced. Clearly, this is not some blob of cells we're talking about, it's a thinking person. Tissue doesn't leap! My possessions don't leap. Animals don't *rejoice*. This is a human being. If John had leapt and then a doctor had gone in and killed him, we'd have to call that murder!
 - d) Psalm 139:13-16.
 - i) We notice that God did the knitting and the weaving of that child. He wasn't a product of chance, but God's making and developing in the womb. In other words,

- once you conceive, the mother becomes a *steward* of life, she's not the owner of it, as though she just bought a new car.
- ii) Second, God had already decided the days and the deeds of this baby. In other words, he had a plan for it!
- e) Jeremiah 1:5 says, essentially, the same thing concerning the calling of the prophet Jeremiah.
- i) Once again, God is the agent of the growing and forming what is in the womb. Don't overlook this! Twice now we've seen this. Pro-choice proponents say, "It's the woman's body and therefore her choice." These texts say otherwise. "No, she's a steward of life, not an owner. Like a kangaroo holding it's young in its moist, warm, nutrient-filled pouch. It's still a baby kangaroo!" And again, God prepares Jeremiah for his work before he was even born!
- c) Finally, read Exodus 21:22. This is incredibly significant.
- i) This is the Law of the righteousness of our God. If a man beats up on a woman who is pregnant, he is in trouble. If he causes her to enter labor and she goes and gives birth to a child that is unharmed, he's pretty well off the hook, but he still has to pay a fine for hurting the woman.
 - ii) On the other hand, if, in beating her up, he causes her to go into labor and the baby is delivered, and the baby is harmed! Then, the principle is this: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, etc. But wait, *life for life*? If the baby was just part of her body, then the Law says that the man would just be hurt, not killed! And if the baby was just her possession, then the Law says the man would have to make restitution. But here, God says, *Life for life!* If the baby dies, "YOU must die woman-beater!" Why? Because of Genesis 9:6. Because God said, Whoever kills a human being, must themselves be killed by the government, *because that human is created in my image*. And do you see right here, God is extending that exact same status to the baby *before it is born!* In the womb, if you have killed it and then she gives birth to a dead baby, you have killed a human being created *in my image* and thus you must die. That means, then, that God and Moses and Israel, according to verse 23, thought that the thing in the mother's womb was not just a mass, but it was a living being, because it could die, it was a baby, and it was in the image of God, thus having all the rights awarded it by God just as if it was a grown man.
- 6) So, conclusion: If there is any confusion or grayness about this issue outside the Bible, then even still, for Christians this is not a confusing matter! God has spoken *very clearly*. Clearly the Bible says we're not dealing with just tissue or a conglomeration of cells that can be treated like a tumor and removed for disposal; this is a human being, this is a live baby, this is created in the image of God, this is a person that must be protected for the glory and image of God.
- a) As soon as the egg is fertilized by the sperm, it becomes scientifically distinct something. It is no longer part of the *mom* or the *dad* scientifically speaking. It now has its own chromosome pattern and DNA. It will depend on its mom, it is incredibly small, it is not very developed, but science, logic, and most importantly, the BIBLE tells us, it's a human being. It's part of our species. And it must be protected.

- 7) Now what about the most common objection. “Ok. Despite all of that, you’re still completely missing the issue. The issue is as simple as women’s rights! Whatever it is, it’s HER right and thus HER decision.” Well hopefully we’ve already shown that that just doesn’t work! Yes, let’s give women all of the rights afforded to men. But should *anyone have the right to murder?* You see, we always go right back to that issue. Nevermind rights, if it is murder, then rights is a moot point. Nobody has that right.
- 8) But let’s think about this objection a bit further. There is a principle in the Bible that has helped me *so immensely* in thinking this, and I hope you will commit it to memory and use it as well. Here it is: in the world God created, *life always triumphs over liberty*. Liberty, freedom to do what we want and choose.
- a) LIFE triumphs over LIBERTY.
- i) In other words, if the object inside the womb is no blob of cells, not a mass of tissue but life, human life. If that’s true, then life must triumph over liberty biblically!
- iii) I’ll give you a biblical example and a secular example.
- (1) First of all, in the Law, and this reminds me of a lot of the cases Jessica and I used to hear about in the city, if a man had an ox who had a history of violence, if that man decided, “Hey, it’s my animal and I’ll do with it as I please.” And if that led to the ox goring and killing another man, then guess what, the owner was to be executed! Why? What was God showing them? He was saying, “My people, you must always consider *life* before your *liberties*.” You must preserve LIFE before you preserve your freedom to choose. Life is MORE IMPORTANT!
- (2) Second, a secular example. We would like to give every person the liberty, the freedom, to drive however they choose! It’s their car, it’s their life. But the fact is, if I’m driving by Cole R-1, there’s a little flashing sign that says, “School Zone, Speed Limit 45 Miles Per Hour”. And if I go, say, 60 through there, the sheriff will pull me over and charge me an astronomical speeding ticket. I could tell the policeman, “Look, it’s my car! It’s my right to do with it whatever I please. It’s my liberty!” And, he’d probably nod his head in agreement as he hands me the ticket and says, “And this is my liberty! A \$200 ticket. Have a nice liberty-filled day.” You see, in our country, it is more important to us that we protect the safety, the LIVES of our children than it is to preserve our liberty in this case. We are *willing* to limit the freedom of passer-by’s *in order to protect life*.
- iv) You see? It’s in the Bible. It’s in the world. Yes, I am all for women’s rights. But I do not think a woman, or a man, or any combination there in, ought ever have the right to kill another human being. No, this is not an issue of women’s rights; this is an issue of human being’s rights. And life always triumphs over liberty. So that, when there is the *option* to preserve a woman’s liberty *before life*, okay, that should be legal! But once there *is* life, and the Bible testifies that that is once there’s a baby in the womb, then that liberty is no longer an option; life must prevail.
- b) Of course, there are still hard questions. Of course, there will still be very very unfortunate circumstances and situations. But everyone knows that it is unacceptable to put a child to death just because they have poor parents. The exact same logic applies to the child while he is in his mother’s womb!
- 10) Oh how many times we think of this issue so politically and emotionally. But let’s be very careful to think about it biblically. That is our chief concern. Not, what does Ryan think. Not,

what do the Democrats think. Our chief and only concern is: what has God said!! That must have the final say in this room for us on this issue.

- 12) Approximately 1.5 million abortions occur in the U.S. every year. It's hard to get an exact figure on how many legal abortions have been performed since Roe v. Wade in 1973, but the most common figures put us around 55 million. In many places, abortions now outnumber live births.
- 13) According to the Census numbers of the US government, as of the end of this year, the number of abortions that our government has sanctioned and said, "Yes, that's okay." The number of total abortions in America since 1973, as of the end of this year, will be the same as taking every single person in the following places and replacing them with a dead, murdered baby. Are you ready? The entire state of Missouri! Illinois, Kansas, Arkansas, Iowa, Kentucky, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Mississippi, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. That's 13 states.
- 14) If that had happened all in one year, that would have been the worst tragedy in the entire history of the world. Folks, that's even *worse a disaster* than Noah's flood. WAY WORSE because no where near that many people were even alive in that day. I wonder how you'll think about abortion? I wonder how you'll *consider* abortion, how you'll weigh the issue? Will we consider the death of 55 million Americans, created in the image of God, a not all that important issue? Will we put it right there next to tax relief and global warming?
- 15) Beloved, this is the most pressing issue facing Americans today. There is no other area where Americans are so brutally attacking and defaming the glory of God as right here. As it turns out, apparently, Americans are America's own worst enemies. Nobody kills more Americans than we do. I hope we will not treat this lightly.
- 17) Now, I don't know who has and who hasn't had an abortion. Statistically, there are some in our church who have. Hear me loud and clear: abortion is sin, but it is not unpardonable sin! There is mercy enough in Jesus Christ. There is so much forgiveness available in our Lord, that no matter whether you're a prideful man, a porn addict, an abortionist, a murderer, a rapist, if you repent and believe in Jesus Christ and *trust the Good News* that God accepts him as your substitute, then you will be forgiven! And you *will* be adopted into his family. And you *will* spend eternity with him. It doesn't mean it won't still hurt. But the pain is bittersweet as it reminds you now of your desperate need for Jesus Christ. We all need him friends.

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