

## Mission Emphasis Sunday

The Altar of Hell

*Jeremiah 7:30-31*

*Memory Verses: Jeremiah 1:5*

### MANUSCRIPT

#### Introduction (Me, We, & the Struggle)

Old Testament Israel was much like our current society. Three thousand years ago, the chosen people of God; the representation of his glory and grace on earth, the guardians of the temple, the Ark, the sacrifices, and the Law, descended so far into idolatry that they sacrificed their children to the fire of a god called Molech. They burned their children alive. And they thought they were doing a good thing. They thought that by sacrificing their children to this so called god it would bring them prosperity, it would secure their future, and it would solve their economic uncertainty. And yes, as **Romans 1:32** acknowledges, it was culturally accepted. It was approved of, cheered on and praised by society.

Surely they knew this was an abomination. **Leviticus 18:21** and **20:2-3** clearly prohibit child sacrifice to this demon. And yet they ignored the one true God in order to do the unthinkable: burn their children alive on the altar of hell. And how does God respond. Look at **Jeremiah 7:30-31**. God says something completely unique in all of scripture here. He says that the sacrifice of their children to the fires of a demon god... not even did it come into his mind. God says, I couldn't even have imagined you'd go that far. Now that's evil. If you were looking for the worst sin of all, other than a final rejection of Christ... I think we've found it. **There is no greater sin than to sacrifice your own child for your own personal prosperity.**

The end of Jeremiah 7 tells us that God judged these people so harshly that their bodies covered the ground and their country became a wasteland. It even says this in **vs. 34: the voice of the bridegroom and bride was silenced**. The Bible often uses the bridegroom and bride as a picture of Jesus and his people, the church. Meaning... God basically shut down shop.

The point... our society has once again devolved into the worship of Molech. We have once again brought our own children to the altar of hell to sacrifice them in the fire for personal prosperity and convenience. To have them burned with salt, or torn apart, or killed with poison so our lives can be better. And once again culture approves and cheers while the church looks on in indifference and the wrath of God towards our society grows hotter and hotter. Abortion isn't just a rare procedure for the most extreme circumstances, as it was sold in the beginning. Now

abortion has become the number one sacrament of progressive pagan culture. In some ways it has become the bedrock of their religion. It is their form of worship.

And in the middle of it all is Stone Creek Church. What is our mission in the midst of this culture of death. What is our response to abortion in general? And more specifically... abortion in our city? There are thousands of children being murdered every single day on the altar of hell. Children who matter to God. Children who should matter to you. What are you going to do about it? The main question today is simple... **Will The Church Remain Comfortable While Our Culture Sacrifices It's Children?** Today, I simply want to give you three ways to respond to the culture of death which is the abortion movement.

#### Teaching (Expand on the Problem, God)

The first way we should respond to abortion in our culture is.... **We Must Think Biblically**. The primary progressive response to abortion is that abortion doesn't kill a human being, it merely terminates a fetus.. a pre-human. Basically abortion is the removal of a clump of cells without meaning or importance. Human waste. Much like removing a cancerous tumor or a parasite.

But the Bible clearly refutes this idea that a pre-born human isn't fully human nor valuable. **Psalms 139:13-16** says we are fully known and made fully human in the womb. **Jeremiah 1:5** says we are known by God even before we are formed in the womb. Our life has value at conception. **Genesis 1:27** tells us that every human life reflects the image of God. According to the Bible our lives begin at conception and our forming bodies in the womb are fully human and fully alive.

And science agrees. In 2019 Steven Jacobs, a doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago, one of the most liberal and progressive universities in the world, surveyed thousands of biologists across all institutions and asked a simple question... according to science, when does human life begin? The results? 96% affirmed that human life begins at fertilization. The child in the womb is a unique human being with a unique DNA and unique features. The baby's heart begins to beat after three weeks. The finger prints on begin to form after 10 weeks... those finger prints are completely unique to this individual are shared by no other human in history. The baby can respond to reflex stimuli after 8 weeks. The baby can feel pain as early as 12 weeks. So as William Larsen states in the most used basic biology textbook; Human Embryology - "fertilization is the beginning of a human being. **Science tells us that a baby in the womb is a human life. The Bible shows us that baby has the same moral value as any human life.**

Abortion is simply murder. The killing of an innocent life that bears the image of God. The killing of a helpless child that should be guarded and

protected at all cost. So... **Will The Church Remain Comfortable While Our Culture Sacrifices It's Children?**

The second way we should respond to abortion in our culture is... **We Must Speak Courageously**. I think many in the church have decided that this is a political issue. Since this isn't an issue that they personally are dealing with... even though it permeates all of society, they have decided to remain quiet. We will let voters deal with it out there... but we shouldn't speak about it in here.

There are a couple of reasons this type of thinking is wrong. First, this isn't a political issue... this is first and foremost a spiritual issue. As we just saw clearly, this is a biblical issue. The bible defines life and when life begins. The bible defines the value and sanctity of life. The bible defines morality and the evils of murder and child sacrifice. As Christians we must stand for the absolute truth of God's word and advocate for the morality taught in scripture. Secondly, the bible says clearly that we have a responsibility to fight injustice, protect the innocent, and speak for those without a voice. Look at **Proverbs 31:8-9**.

When the government remained in their lane and was concerned about infrastructure, protection, roads, electricity, voting, etc... the church didn't really have much to say. When the government began legislating morality and telling us that it was a right to kill children in the womb... then the church has to speak up. The church hasn't become more political... the government has become more religious... and we must speak up about that! **It is your calling as a Christian to speak up for those who cannot speak and to become a voice for justice for the innocent**. So... will you speak up? **Will The Church Remain Comfortable While Our Culture Sacrifices It's Children?**

The third way we should respond to abortion in our culture is... **We Must Sacrifice Personally**. We speak boldly for the sanctity of life and the injustice of abortion... but... and this is huge.... we do so with love and grace. We have to remember the words of Paul in **Ephesians 6:12**. The people who need to hear our message also need to know that Christ is their Lord and offers grace and forgiveness at the foot of the cross.

We speak up courageously and boldly, but we do so with love and a heart for the lost. We are upset that some women are choosing abortions... but we recognize that we are also sinners in need of grace... so we show grace. We are angry that abortion doctors are murdering children by the hundreds every day... but we know the power of God to save anyone, no matter how evil they may be, so we invite them into the loving arms of Christ. **It takes sacrificing your self-righteousness and anger and rage... in order to remain Christ-like and effective in this cause**. Can you do that? Can you speak for the cause while also

remaining Christ-like?

We remain Christ-like when we pray. When there are opportunities to come together and pray for the unborn we should come together. When there are times to prayer walk around the abortion clinic we should come to pray. We must join with ministries like Sidewalk Advocates and Curbside For Life to stand and pray against this culture of death.

We remain Christ-like when we support local crisis pregnancy centers and other pro-life ministries. Soon Danville will have a wonderful center that we can all easily support with our time and money.

We remain Christ-like when we foster and adopt children who otherwise would've been discarded by society. We must show the world that there is an alternative and if need be, the church will pick up the slack. We've been called to take care of the orphan.

We remain Christ-like when we get creative. Our Mission Team here at the church is working on some really fun and exciting initiatives in this arena. Our church must become the safest place for abortion minded women and women who have had abortions. They need to know that there is forgiveness and love at the foot of the cross. **Will The Church Remain Comfortable While Our Culture Sacrifices It's Children?**

### Application

Ancient cultures sacrificed their children to demons on the altar of hell to secure their own future prosperity. Our current culture is sacrificing their children for convenience and comfort. But God calls us to sacrifice our comfort for them and their unborn. We must get involved and get off the bench. When the innocent are being sacrificed, God's people must think biblically, speak courageously, and sacrifice personally. If we will not protect the unborn, who will? Who will save the unborn from the altar of hell? **The abortion movement is active. The church must be even more active!**

### Conclusion

Here the altar is flipped. Here the innocent die so the guilty can live as they wish. But once upon a time there was another sacrifice. 2000 years ago the most innocent man in all of history laid himself on the altar of the cross. He did this for the guilty so they could have eternal life. We don't fight abortion because we are self-righteous. We fight it because we know what it cost to save us. Jesus died on the altar of heaven to save those who could not save themselves. We will fight the altar of hell for those who cannot fight for themselves. **Will The Church Remain Comfortable While Our Culture Sacrifices It's Children?**