

Kids are from God 1

(preached 6/2/24)

Please turn to *Psalms 127:3*

SOME SAY THERE'S A WAR ON CHRISTMAS AND I AGREE.

Others say there's a war on Marriage, and I say "yes."

I SAY THERE'S ALSO WAR ON CHILDREN AND IT'S THE DEVIL HIMSELF WHO'S LEADING IT.

Why? **Because children are blessing given us to us by the Lord Himself!**

[Psa 127:3-5 NKJV] 3 Behold, children [are] a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb [is] a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So [are] the children of one's youth. 5 Happy [is] the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

The Devil and his human agents have worked hard to convince people otherwise. In today's American culture there are some who see kids as a curse, a burden that drains their resources and subtracts from both parents and planet. Demonically inspired forces seek to kill children in the womb and defile them after birth with the corruptions of the world.

These efforts have inspired some to not be married and not have kids, fearing some great financial burden & loss of being able to freely pursue goals and desires. Others claim "overpopulation" is will eventually kill the planet, therefore kids are taking away from "mother earth."

In 1990 (according to Statista. com), the birthrate in America was 16.7 births for every 1000 people and by 2023 said rate fell to 12 births per 1000. Factors indicated are cultural norms, access to healthcare, economic conditions, and "family planning choices" which is a fancy way of saying abortion. Other factors are "delayed childbearing" (people are waiting until they're older) and increase in use of contraceptives.

Birthrates have specifically declined among the young, according to the CDC:

- Ages 15-19 saw a decline of 8% by 2020 (from previous decades).
- Ages 20-24 saw a decline of 5 %
- Ages 25-29 saw a decline of 4%
- Ages 35-44 actually saw an increase!

Just for some perspective, the 2024 population of the US is 324,000,000.

- 8% of that is: 25.92 million people.
- 5% of that is: 16.2 million people.
- 4% of that is: 12.96 million people.
- **TOTAL: *55.08 million kids who haven't been born in the last few years in the US alone!***

NOWADAYS COUPLES, ESPECIALLY WOMEN, ARE ENCOURAGED BY SOME ELEMENTS IN SOCIETY TO AVOID HAVING KIDS. They're told that w/o kids they will live their best lives now, have more money, and be free to pursue goals and desires. A football player was recently lambasted when he gave a commencement speech at a Catholic college encouraging people to get married, have kids, and for women to be stay at home moms. I've heard other women tell me personally that they've been criticized for staying home and having multiple children...and most of this finger wagging is coming from other women.

I would like to say that one of my **greatest honors of being Gateway's pastor** is seeing all the families who come here and have LOTS of kids! God is the One Who gave us our children! The Lord is the One Who designed the miraculous act of procreation! Kids are from God and are one of the greatest blessings any parent can have!!!

THE IDEA OF KIDS COMES STRAIGHT FROM GOD. It began with the beings we call "angels" who are the first sentient race He created and yes: *He made them in His own likeness or image.* They are called "sons of God" 5x in the OT.

Even though the word "Ben" has become a common name nowadays, it's a label that means "son of..." Therefore the name "Benjamin" really means "son of Jamin" meaning that "Jamine" is the real name. Remember the movie "Ben Hur"? That means "son of Hur" with Hur being the real name.

In the OT God refers to the angels as “Sons of God” and the Hebrew is “Ben Elohim.” They’re a lot like us in many ways and since they were created first, it’s more appropriate to say we’re a lot like them. They’re not mindless servants but have free will as evidenced by the fact that, on several occasions, some of them rebelled against the Lord and went their own way.

They even look like us to the point where they could walk among us and we wouldn’t know:

[Heb 13:1-2 ESV] 1 Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware.

Angels are direct creations of the Lord, are spirits who can (somehow) take on physical form, they walk, talk, can learn things, can preach the Gospel, and can act in both the physical and spiritual worlds. Most of them do NOT have wings despite popular art and tradition.

In the beginning was the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They existed before time, space, energy, light, dark, heaven, and the universe as both Genesis 1 and John 1 testify to.

NOW IMAGINE IF THEY HAD SAID: *“we’re good with things just as they are! We have goals, dreams, and ambitions and bunch of kids will do nothing but weigh us down and drain our resources! Better to stay single and unimpeded. That way we can spread our wings and fly!”*

If they’d thought and felt that way, *then all we would ever have had was “in the beginning God”* or “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” **And that would be it.**

THE REASON THERE’S MORE, A WHOLE LOT MORE, IS BECAUSE THE LORD DECIDED TO HAVE KIDS.

The Lord is the One Who created the idea of FAMILY, starting one, and watching them grow.

Now let's pause and take stock: all of us who have kids and grandkids, **go back in time to the moment when you and your spouse decided to do this for the first time**...or second, third, etc. We did so KNOWING that it would be a life-changing experience, and not all of it good. We knew that:

- It would mean greater sacrifice for us in EVERY way: financially, physically, mentally, emotionally.
- Kids have free will and a sinful nature just like us.
- They would both love us and, at times, hate us.
- They would obey and disobey.
- They would take on our traits: both good and bad.
- They would imitate us more than listen to us.

We WILLINGLY took this on, knowing the reward far outweighs the headache.

We did so not driven merely by biology, but the Holy Spirit.

We're made in the image of God so part of us has the same desire He does: to have children and start a family.

When our kids are babies and toddlers it certainly limits our "freedom" but only in the sense that we're responsible for another human being 24/7. A little son or daughter who needs us in every way! **I REMEMBER WHEN OUR OLDEST JESSE WAS BORN, I WAS SCARED.** I loved that boy with all of me, and I was scared because of his total dependence on myself and Becky for everything. It was truly a "life-changing" experience.

***Having kids means you are going to sacrifice and serve*...constantly.** The very meaning of being a Christian! "*I want to be more like Jesus!*" some Christians say, perhaps pointing to Him working miracles. Yet the main focus of Jesus ministry was sacrifice and service.

He didn't come down here to **"spread His wings and fly."** To have the freedom to do whatever He wanted. To become financially secure.

He and Father made a plan and once He was born into a human body, **He chose to subject Himself to Father and the plan** no matter what. What was the plan? **Die on the Cross!** Serve constantly, make the ultimate sacrifice to save that which was lost!

BEING A PARENT GIVES SOMEONE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE MORE LIKE JESUS: to crucify the self, its goals and desires, for the sake of others who are depending on you.

As a parent & grandparent, **there will be times when your heart is full of joy**, and other times when it will be shattered into 100 pieces. There will be times when your child hugs you and declares their love, and other times when they scream that they hate you. Sometimes their choices that make us proud, and other ones that inspire us want to beat our heads against the wall.

We had some knowledge of this before we had our first kids, and a lot more after we did! Yet many of us decided to have a 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or more kids even after we experienced all these things and more.

Despite days or weeks of sleepless nights, tantrums, fights, worry, sickness, poor choices, or what have you there's one thing that endures through all of that. Something that overarches all of it and never waivers: love. **WE LOVE THEM DESPITE EVERYTHING.**

God is God which means He knew everything beforehand. He knew that some of His angelic sons would rebel and go their own way and I can only imagine they caused God some major headaches!

- Some of them tried to create their own race and succeeded, which is why we contend with demonic spirits to this day.
- His greatest angelic son appeared in the GOE and messed things up for all of humanity and physical creation that lasts until this day.
- The same angelic son will rear his ugly reptilian head in the last days to wreak havoc upon humanity.

God knew all this ahead of time, in minute detail, **yet chose to create His first set of kids (the angels) anyway.** I wager these things cause Him grief, yet He went ahead and had angelic children anyway. How many did He create? Just a few or...?

[Heb 12:22 ESV] 22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to **innumerable angels** in festal gathering,

In other words, **GOD CREATED LOTS AND LOTS OF KIDS**...a massively huge family!

Years back I saw a picture of our former **Pastor Fran** and his family—he has great great grandkids! There must have been 50 people in the picture and I said “*Pastor Fran! All of these came from you and Shirley?*” to which he replied they did!

Picture THAT picture with God and His first set of kids: the angels.

There wouldn’t be a camera with a wide enough lens to take it!

- The idea of having kids came from God.
- The idea of having a huge family came from God!
- *Never let anyone shame you for it if you’ve chosen the same!*

It doesn’t stop there, however. Even though the Lord created an innumerable amount of angelic kids, **He decided they needed younger brothers and sisters:**

[Gen 1:26-31 ESV] 26 Then God said, “**Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.** And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” 27 **So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.** 28 And **God blessed them.** And God said to them, “**Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it,** and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” 29 And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. 30 And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. 31 And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was **very good.**

Angels are God’s children in the spirit world, humans are God’s kids in the physical world.

- Both are made in His image.
- Both are His kids: an elder and younger brother.
- Both are Ben Elohim.

Look at verse 28: God **blesses** Adam & Eve. A translation of the word “blessed” is “adore.” God adored His younger set of kids the moment they were born! Another translation of the word “blessed” is **“TO MAKE KNEEL DOWN.”**

In other words, **He created His kids to love, worship, and obey Him.** That’s why we have commandments calling upon our kids to obey us, their parents.

Next God immediately gives His new set of kids an INHERITANCE: **authority over the earth**. They're given dominion over every aspect of creation, both the earth and all the animals on it.

WHAT does this "dominion" look like?

Listen carefully: **TO BE FRUITFUL (HAVE KIDS) AND MULTIPLY.**

That is how a species takes dominion over anything.

I admire Islam for this reason alone: this is their #1 method of spreading their religion across the globe. They evangelize somewhat, but their main commandment to their people in order for Islam to rule is "be fruitful and multiply" much more so than preaching their gospel. They have lots of kids and raise them in Islam from the moment their born, the best way to "make disciples."

God tells us to have kids and encourages us to have lots of them! Like He did and continues to.

Let's not forget: **in order to Save His children after we sinned, He gave His Son.**

Jesus chose to come here to be born of woman, making Him "begotten" (like us) and therefore the Son of God. **God's Kid bought eternal life for the rest of God's human kids!**

In both OT and NT having kids is something **MOST EVERYONE DESPERATELY SOUGHT AFTER**, and when they couldn't, they believed God had cursed them! They valued children quite highly and spent hours in prayer asking the Lord for them.

[Psa 17:14 ESV] 14 from men by your hand, O LORD, from men of the world whose portion is in this life. **You fill their womb with treasure; they are satisfied with children**, and they leave their abundance to their infants.

[Psa 113:9 ESV] 9 He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the LORD!

[Psa 115:14 ESV] 14 May the LORD give you increase, you and your children!

[Psa 128:3 ESV] 3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table.

[Psa 128:6 ESV] 6 May you see your children's children! Peace be upon Israel!

[Psa 147:13 ESV] 13 For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your children within you.

[Pro 17:6 ESV] 6 Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.

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