



IDENTITY- Miracle of life

April 28, 2024

Glenn Garvin



BIG IDEA – Every human has intrinsic value.

scripture focus - [Psalms 139:13-18](#) For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; **all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.** How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.

- **We are created on purpose for purpose.**
- Our **free choice shattered what** we see as the image of God in us and in others.
- **Life is a miracle.**

God cares deeply about our physical bodies; He created us to live in them! However, some believe the body to be evil, "carnal," earthbound, and overall, not good. But did you know the Bible takes a very high view of our physical bodies? In fact, God declared our bodies very good! This week we'll take a look at our identity from the perspective of our physical bodies...all the way from conception to the grave.

Every person was created with intrinsic value. This says a lot about how we interact with God, ourselves, and others.

Genesis 1:31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

The Apostle Paul, after a radical conversion, went about speaking in synagogues (Jewish churches) and the marketplace (outdoor swap meets). He met with Greek philosophers ([Epicurean's and Stoics'](#)) (NOTE: **Epicureanism** focused on the **pursuit of pleasure, within the bounds of moderation, and the**

avoidance of pain. To the **Stoics**, who were influenced by both Socrates and the Cynic tradition, equating **pleasure with the Good and pain with Evil.**) Acts 17:16-24.

Paul and the philosophers began to debate about this new foreign god Paul spoke of. They said, “what is this babbler trying to say?” But something intrigued these expert arguers, and they invited Paul to the [Areopagus](#) (otherwise known as Mars Hill). Then Paul said this,

[Acts 17:24-28](#)

He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.

Scripture makes It clear; the Holy Trinity (Father, Son & Holy Spirit) is the creator of life. The Father gives life [Deuteronomy 32:39](#). The Son is the bread of life [John 6:35](#), The Spirit animates or makes life [2 Corinthians 3:6](#).

Humans have dignity, worth and value.

Our technological advances outpace our ethical & moral wisdom and development of character. Isn't it interesting that, as humans, **we can build machines and tools that can see more and know more than any time before!** The Doctor/tech who sees a full body anatomy scan can detect that something looks wrong, but with human hubris will advise the mother to terminate or abort the child.

In the oldest book in the Old Testament – the book of Job, Job is facing one disaster after another. His children are killed in a tragic collapse of the building they were in at a family gathering. Job gets an awful skin disease that just seems to get worse. And Job's friends at first try to console him, but eventually do what we often do – try to convince Job that he must have done something bad, something wrong and deserves the suffering he is receiving. They want Job to repent, blame God and just die – ending his suffering. But in this story, of facing the full force of Satan's plan to get him to deny God, there is a lot to learn about the preciousness of life itself!

Elihu in making his case to Job says, 'For the Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life. [Job 33:4](#)

LIFE IS A MIRACLE

It happens every day, thousands of times - [4.3 births per second or about 259 births per minute for the world.](#)

The creation of life is one of nature's most complex, mysterious, and miraculous processes. Life is complex. And now, the medical community agrees.

When does human life begin?

The medical community has known this for decades. "Human life begins when the ovum is fertilized, and the new combined cell mass begins to divide." - Dr. Jasper Flemings Williams, Former President of the National Medical Association, From Newsweek November 12, 1973 (p 74). It is still a [fact](#), but now it has been declared controversial over this genetically unique cell and if it should be considered a human person.

The Bible uses exalted language to describe human beings.

The Apostle Paul tells the churches in Ephesus, that God chose us before the creation of the world [Ephesians 1:4](#). **God knows us, loves us well before this big God story ever began!**

A person's usefulness in society is not determined by their value at the beginning, middle or ending of their life. It's not defined by spiritual, physical, intelligence or moral character.

"What makes us a person with dignity is not that we know God, but that he knows us; not that we love God, but that he has set his love upon us!" - John Stott

Aging or death doesn't determine our value.

Because of sin, we do live in a world filled with pain, suffering, violence, and terror. **The whole earth groans under the weight of our sin – Paul says.**

[Romans 8:22-23](#)

For we know that **all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.** And **we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.** We, too, wait with eager hope for the day

when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

In our struggles with our physical body, we must be careful not to devalue our bodies. We honor our bodies because God made them!

In our arguments within our culture about human life and our physical bodies, we must remember what God says because He is the creator of life!

We must avoid the judgement-traps about valuing another person based on their body type, how they look, or even what they wear!

We live in a world where it is considered compassionate to end the life of a human being because of inconvenience or seen as a burden to others. This is not a Biblical perspective!

Life does not end at birth and human value is not determined by humanity, but by the Creator. God loves and defends His image bearers at every stage of life. We are invited to do the same. - Jamie Metzi

The Bible presents children as a gift from God. [Psalms 127:3](#), [Psalm 113:9](#)

The Spark of Life

The Psalms declare the beauty and wonder of what is happening at the beginning of our life!

Psalm 139 is the prayer of David when he was made king over all Israel [1 Chronicles 12:38](#).

[Psalms 139:13-18](#) For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; **all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.** How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.

Q: How does the reading of Psalm 139:13-18 reveal God's purposes and the dignity of all human life?

- The gospel of Luke records the story of John the Baptist birth, telling John's father, Zechariah exactly what will take place in his wife's "old" body! [Luke 1:5-2:14](#)
- The Apostle Mathew tells us about the miracle of Jesus birth well before Mary becomes miraculously pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit [Matthew 1:18](#).
- The Apostle John tells us exactly who this baby boy born to Mary, God in flesh and dwelling among us! [John 1:14](#)

Q: In what way does the incarnation of Jesus, taking on a human form like yours, increase your appreciation for your own life and for the life of every other person on this planet?

Life in a body

The Bible takes a very high view of our physical bodies.

- We are created with physical bodies (Genesis 2:7) and declared "very good" (Genesis 1:31).
- God purposely provides nourishment for our bodies in great variety, all "pleasing to the eye and good for food" (Genesis 2:9).
- Jesus incarnated into a physical body (Luke 2:7) and was physically resurrected with a body (Luke 24).
- We are promised a redeemed physical body (2 Corinthians 5:1-5).
- Our bodies are "a temple" of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19).

Despite our scientific accomplishments, we still live in bodies subject to pain and disease.

Despite our advances in healthcare and our obsession about staying healthy and fit. We now see the possibility of living past 100 years old! But our family structures, our financial healthcare structures and our affordable living structures have not kept up with the promised "fountain of youth" lifestyle!

I'm not against aging, but I promise you that life here in this sin-filled world and this sin-ravaged body was never meant to be!

Just as important as it is to realize that God gives life in our beginning, it is critical that we understand that God has an end-of-life plan for us as well. **As we age, our bodies daily remind us to think about wrapping things up, properly preparing for how we end well!**

Even then it is God who gives life, God who sustains life and God who takes it away!

The tension is knowing that God created our bodies in perfection, but our free choices to sin has had devastating effects on our lives. This is especially the case for those who suffer from chronic illness, who may in their moments of despair be led to wonder if they are somehow defective before God.

The New Testament is filled with Jesus' healing abnormalities in people's physical bodies as a sign of compassion and hope; reminding them that they are seen and loved by God!

Our job is to value life, honoring God at each stage and season of our existence here and do so in our views and opinions of other's lives as well!

Every person matters to God! To view certain persons as "less" at the beginning, middle or end is not a Biblical perspective! And, neither is it right that we view others as not valued because of a genetic difference, a birth defect, or a debilitating disease!

This is the opposite of celebrating the image of God in every single person.

For those who believe in Jesus. For those who are committed to follow Jesus – the end of this life is not the END OF ALL.

What is coming for us is BETTER than life on this planet!

The Apostle Paul in hopes to prepare us for more, writes to the churches in Corinth.

[2 Corinthians 5:1-5](#)

For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

He also writes, reminding the Church, that our lives are valued by God, but that God considers our bodies as sacred and holy because it's a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit.

Read [1 Corinthians 6:12-14](#) on your own this week. If we might be thinking that our bodies are our own and we can do whatever we want with them – Paul writes, “They [our bodies] were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies.”

Q: Doesn't that have profound effects on what we do with our bodies?

Paul concludes with these powerful verses in [1 Corinthians 6:19-20](#), “we are not our own, we were bought with a great price.” So we must honor God with our body!

I hope you have heard from God's Word about how much God uniquely and individually values you. I hope you heard that you are a miracle of God's creation, you bear His image, and He has purpose for your life.

My prayer for us is to:

- Ask God to give you a clearer view of your life here, your future hope and eternity in Christ.
- Ask God to renew the way you think about our human body. To enjoy it and use it for God's glory.
- Ask God to help remind us of the eternal value that God places on others?

Oh God, help us see ourselves as You see us. Renew in us a proper view of our body. Remind us of the value You see in others and that can view them as You do. Amen.

NOTES

Scriptures

[Acts 17:24-28](#)

He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, and human hands can't serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need. From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries. “His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. For in him we live and move and exist. As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.

Romans 8:22-23

For we know that **all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.** And **we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.** We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

Psalms 139:13-18 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.

2 Corinthians 5:1-5

For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies. While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

Discussion Guide

YOUR STORY

Q: How do you think comparing yourself to others impacts your sense of worth and where you find your value?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read a loud Psalm 139: 13-18

Q: How does David feel about God's total knowledge of him?

Q: How do you feel about God's total knowledge of you? why?

Q: Which of the statements in 139:1-5 do you find most comforting? Why? Which one makes you most uncomfortable? Why?

Read a loud Ephesians 1:4-7

Q: How does the understanding that human dignity and value are established by God, rather than by human standards, shape your perspective on self-worth and the worth of others?

Q: How can we shift our focus from earning worth to living out the worth God has already given us?

Q: What role should comparison play in determining where we find our value?

Q: In what ways does understanding redemption through Jesus's blood in Ephesians 1:7 affect how you view your past mistakes and failures?

Q: How does finding our worth in God's view of us affect the way we approach challenges and setbacks in life?

MAKE ONE

What are some practical ways we can help others see their value in God's eyes?