

1-28-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: Help Me...A Child's Cry!

Purpose: Proclaim a Biblical view about how God values children and our responsibility to care for them and shape their thinking and values.

Truth for Today: God has entrusted Christians with the care and development of children.

Text: Psalm 127:3

Topic: Children, Abortion, Right to Life, Foster Parents, Adoption

Help Me...A Child's Cry!

- I. **Announce:** If Christians are going to be 'salt and light', we've got to get involved in the political process. Primary elections are around the corner: (1) Voter registration in the lobby, Table by KZ. (2) 1st Candidate forum, next Wed. 6:30-8. (3) Next week, Pastor Raphael Cruz, from communist Cuba talk about danger of socialism and communism in America. Afterwards, seminar with "Christians Engaged", 1-3pm in PH. Topics: Biblical worldview, Biblical justice, Biblical economics. Older kids and teens would benefit. Table by KZ, **Sign up lunch**
- II. **Introduction** **KZ band** Today we're talking about our responsibility to care for children and shape their thinking and values.
 - A. Churches have taken time every January to remember that **All children have a 'right to life' guaranteed in the Constitution and advocated by the Bible.** In 1973, the Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand. +/-63 million children were never given the chance to live. In 2022 the Supreme Court reversed Roe Vs Wade and left abortion decisions to the states. PTL! AR. and TX. are both right to life states. Ar. has a petition to add the right to abortion to the state constitution on Nov. ballot.
 - B. What happens to the children after they're born? Who cares for them if the parent can't or won't? Who is responsible for what they're being taught and exposed to in school, media, and culture? Today we'll focus on our Christian responsibility to care for children and shape their thinking and values in our family, our community, and the world. **[Ps. 127:3 (NLT) Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him.]** They're a gift and reward to their family but also their community and nation if they're properly cared for and trained in the truth.
 - C. Title: Help Me...A Child's Cry
- III. **When does life begin?** (Why I'm pro-life) **Pic³** Spark of light at the moment of conception.
 - A. **[Luke 1:41 (ESV) And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb...][Psalm 139:13-16 (NLT) You (God) made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb.]**
 - B. When Roe vs. Wade passed, science didn't know when a human life/ personhood began. Today there's no question that human life begins at conception. However, some states are offering a right to murder an innocent child in the name of choice and convenience. It is every Christian's responsibility to continue to stand for the most vulnerable among us from conception to natural death. One way is voting. The wrong people in political office could pass laws making abortion unrestricted again. We must be vigilant in our stand for life! Elections matter. Love him or hate him, Pres. Trump appointed 3 pro-life Supreme Court judges.

- C. Abortion's not the unpardonable sin. God forgives, heals and even uses our mistakes.
- IV. **What does Jesus think about children?**
- A. [Mt. 19:13–15 (NLT)]...some parents brought their children to Jesus so he could... pray for them. But the disciples scolded the parents for **bothering him**. 14 But **Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them..."** 15 And he placed his hands on their heads and blessed them before he left.]
- B. Jesus loves kids. He's concerned about their care and future. We should be, too. Today's culture isn't. WND² If Americans throughout their nation's history have embraced any common values, at the top of the list would be the conviction that children are a gift from God – and to be protected at all costs. Why then, in today's America, are so many adults destroying children– from aborting them right up to the moment of birth, to killing them after they're born, to sexualizing them virtually from birth (Harvard now teaches a course on infants who are "LGBTQIA+)," to taking young children to events glorifying drag queens. As they grow older, America's children are systematically sexualized in public school classrooms (Texarkana supt?). Many children are seduced into "identifying" as the opposite gender, or an imaginary gender, (siri 68-72 genders) and are permitted to take drugs and hormones, and to have their healthy breasts amputated or to undergo castration. They are indoctrinated with Marxist ideologies like "critical race theory," intended to condition them to hate and reject their own country, their parents, their faith, their race, their gender, and themselves. As a result, youth suicides and other mental and emotional disorders have skyrocketed. Even violent crime at an early age is becoming an increasing reality. Make no mistake, the harm being done to children in this war is neither accidental nor collateral: Children are the primary target. The left's worst nightmare is a nation of kids raised learning about God and Jesus, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, the Golden Rule, sexual morality, and righteousness.
- C. Warning from Jesus [Mark 9:42 (NCV)] "If one of these little children believes in me, and **someone causes that child to sin**, it would be better for that person to have a large stone tied around his neck and be drowned in the sea.] Jesus refers to severe judgment. This is a warning to those who would harm children's faith in God and a call for Christians to protect kids from what's happening in culture.
- V. **What responsibility does the Bible give Christians for caring for children outside our family and shaping their values?**
- A. [James 1:27 (NLT)] **Pure and genuine religion** in the sight of God the Father means caring for **orphans**...in their distress...] Def. orphan: A child who is deprived of father or mother or of both¹ due to death or abandonment.
- B. Moses [Deut. 6:7 (NLT)] **Repeat them (God's Words) again and again to your children**. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.] At home and cultural influence.
- VI. **What is COTR doing to care for children and instill Biblical values.**(panel stage)
- A. KZ ministers to an average of 495 children on weekends and 180 Wed. night.

- B. PH youth church averages 120 teenagers on Wed night and have student led ministries on 5 area school campuses.
- C. We expanded our Grace House, 10 bedrooms, for homeless single moms and their kids. Last year they served 45 moms and kids. SSS goes to 4-5 apartment complexes to care for kids, teach the Bible and citizenship. We provide assistance to local schoolteachers and do diaper drives. We feed and clothe children in Haiti, Kenya, India, and many other nations. We provide shoes on many mission trips.

VII. COTR's partnership with Community Groups we support (2 min. Timer: Fact-Ministry overview-Testimony. Tables with more info in lobby)

- A. Crisis Pregnancy help
 - 1. Pathways: Crisis Pregnancy Center–Laura McDowell
 - 2. 1st Choice Crisis Pregnancy Center – Sarah Sat, 2nd Sun; Beth Pesek 1st sun
- B. Foster care and adoption
 - 1. “For the Sake of One”: Foster care and adoption, Angela Coston (Only 7 foster families in Bowie County; 67 kids in care; over 1000 in our region to Tyler)
 - 2. “The Call”: Foster care and adoption, Holly Carver
 - 3. ***Watersprings Ranch: Long term, residential group homes for children who have been abused, neglected and abandoned. David & Carla Whatley materials in lobby
 - 4. Stand and honor adoptive or foster parents
- C. “Fearfully and Wonderfully Made” NICU Ministry, Catie Swenson
- D. RunningWJRanch: Horseback riding to advance kids physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Brittany Rogers, Sun only, Executive director. Norma Sat
- E. Reaching moms and kids in crisis on the streets
 - 1. Grace House - Karen Rayfield COTR M... Project Hope
 - 2. Each ministry will have materials/displays in the lobby.

VIII. Conclusion/ Response: What can I do to help children grow up healthy and have Biblical values?

- A. Support our community ministries, go to SSS, work with kids in KZ and PH, volunteer at GH, consider adoption and foster care, go on the streets with Karen, give money to projects and mission support, be involved in what your kids are being taught. Talk to the principal if there's a concern, volunteer at a school (they're begging for help), run for local school boards, etc. God has entrusted you and I with the care and development of children.
- B. Prayer: Tell the Lord we're available and ask the Lord what He wants us to do? Look for opportunities to help a child.

IX. Souls: Your greatest need today is to get right with God. We become a Christian by believing and following Jesus.

X. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

- 1. Webster, N. (2006). In [*Noah Webster's first edition of An American dictionary of the English language*](#). Foundation for American Christian Education.
- 2. World Net Daily

3. <https://www.sciencealert.com/scientists-just-captured-the-actual-flash-of-light-that-sparks-when-sperm-meets-an-egg> 2016 Northwestern University.

XI. Supplemental Material

- A. II A Psalm 139:13–16 (NLT) You (*God*) made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. 14 Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous... 15 You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. 16 You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.
- B. World Net Daily: If Americans throughout their nation’s history have embraced any common values, at the top of the list would be the conviction that children are precious, innocent, a gift from God – and to be protected at all costs. Why then, in today’s America, are so many adults destroying children in a dizzying variety of ways – from aborting them right up to the moment of birth, to killing them after they’re born, to sexualizing them virtually from birth (Harvard now teaches a course on infants who are “LGBTQIA+,” “queer” or “asexual”), to injecting them with an experimental “vaccine” proven to be both ineffective and dangerous, to transporting 2- and 3-year-olds to events glorifying mentally ill, demonically possessed men dressed as women (some with criminal histories of child sexual abuse) who regale America’s next generation with fantastical stories about heroic LGBT characters? And this is just the abuse heaped daily on infants and toddlers. As they grow older, America’s children are systematically sexualized in government (“public”) school classrooms and after-school LGBT “support clubs,” as well as by ubiquitous transgender recruiters on social media platforms like TikTok. As a direct result, many children are seduced into “identifying” as the opposite gender, or a brand-new imaginary gender, and although too young to drive or vote, are convinced – and permitted – to take powerful drugs and hormones, and to have their healthy breasts amputated or to undergo chemical or surgical castration. Make no mistake: Today’s rampant transgender grooming craze amounts to widespread child sexual abuse of the most serious and irreversible kind. America is literally normalizing pedophilia. As if the rampant sexual abuse were not enough, alongside it are many other daily educational assaults on America’s youth: They are indoctrinated with toxic and corrupting Marxist ideologies like “critical race theory,” intended to condition them to hate and reject their own country, their parents, their faith, their race, their gender and themselves. At the same time, they’re being intentionally frightened of the future by being fed lurid, terrifying – and utterly groundless – apocalyptic tales of the imminent destruction of the world due to catastrophic, man-caused global warming. During the COVID hysteria, they were forced to wear useless and ineffective masks even outside, while engaged in sporting activities, causing some to collapse from oxygen deprivation. And of course, things just get worse once the kids go off to college, probably the most deranged and toxic environment in the country, where young people are indoctrinated assembly-line style with Marxist ideology, intimidated into adopting perverse woke sensibilities and loyalties, and effortlessly drawn into

immoral, self-destructive, and hopeless lifestyles. As a result of these and still other assaults on America's young people, youth suicides have skyrocketed, as have depression, anxiety, and other mental and emotional disorders. Even violent crime at an early age, something virtually unheard-of in previous eras, is becoming an increasing reality, as reflected in recent headlines, including "6-year-old student in custody after allegedly shooting his elementary school teacher in Virginia" and "12-year-old Oklahoma girl accused of stabbing her 9-year-old brother to death." Meanwhile, the synthetic opioid fentanyl, the No. 1 cause of death of younger Americans 18 to 45, destroys thousands of children annually. In fact, recently – making its first appearance just prior to Halloween – it has been disguised as candy (so-called "rainbow fentanyl") so as to destroy as many kids as possible. The fentanyl crisis is largely a result of the Biden administration's intentional and catastrophic demolition of border enforcement, essentially handing over the U.S.-Mexico border region to the terroristic Mexican drug cartels, who in turn profit massively from trafficking China-sourced fentanyl and other illicit drugs into America. Moreover, the same cartels reap huge profits from facilitating (for a price) the trek of millions of aliens intending to cross the border illegally, a key feature of which is the rampant sexual abuse and/or sex trafficking of countless girls and young women attempting to make the dangerous trek into the U.S. This multi-front war is intended ultimately to convert America's next generation into a frightened, corrupted, ideologically brainwashed and therefore obedient version of the bright and moral people they were created to be. Make no mistake, the harm being done to children in this war is neither accidental nor collateral: Children are the primary target. Thus, adds Kupelian, "Because of this moral inversion, the left's worst nightmare is a nation of kids raised learning about God and Jesus, and the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount, about the Golden Rule and about sexual morality and about righteousness. The radical left hates all of that with a blinding hatred, since Christian virtue represents an existential threat to the Marxist left, and always has."

- C. 1 Samuel 1:1–2:11 (NLT) There was a man named Elkanah who lived in Ramah in the region of Zuph in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, of Ephraim. 2 Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not. 3 Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of Heaven's Armies at the Tabernacle. The priests of the Lord at that time were the two sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas. 4 On the days Elkanah presented his sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to Peninnah and each of her children. 5 And though he loved Hannah, he would give her only one choice portion because the Lord had given her no children. 6 So Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her because the Lord had kept her from having children. 7 Year after year it was the same—Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. Each time, Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat. 8 "Why are you crying, Hannah?" Elkanah would ask. "Why aren't you eating? Why be downhearted just because you have no children? You have me—isn't that better than having ten sons?" 9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh,

Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. 10 Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. 11 And she made this vow: "O Lord of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut." 12 As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. 13 Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. 14 "Must you come here drunk?" he demanded. "Throw away your wine!" 15 "Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord. 16 Don't think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow." 17 "In that case," Eli said, "go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him." 18 "Oh, thank you, sir!" she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad. 19 The entire family got up early the next morning and went to worship the Lord once more. Then they returned home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the Lord remembered her plea, 20 and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I asked the Lord for him." 21 The next year Elkanah and his family went on their annual trip to offer a sacrifice to the Lord and to keep his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "Wait until the boy is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the Lord permanently." 23 "Whatever you think is best," Elkanah agreed. "Stay here for now, and may the Lord help you keep your promise." So she stayed home and nursed the boy until he was weaned. 24 When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh. They brought along a three-year-old bull for the sacrifice and a basket of flour and some wine. 25 After sacrificing the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. 26 "Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the very woman who stood here several years ago praying to the Lord. 27 I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. 28 Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life." And they worshiped the Lord there. 1 Then Hannah prayed: "My heart rejoices in the Lord! The Lord has made me strong. Now I have an answer for my enemies; I rejoice because you rescued me. 2 No one is holy like the Lord! There is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God. 3 "Stop acting so proud and haughty! Don't speak with such arrogance! For the Lord is a God who knows what you have done; he will judge your actions. 4 The bow of the mighty is now broken, and those who stumbled are now strong. 5 Those who were well fed are now starving, and those who were starving are now full. The childless woman now has seven children, and the woman with many children wastes away. 6 The Lord gives both death and life; he brings some down to the grave but raises others up. 7 The Lord makes some poor and others rich; he brings some down and lifts others up. 8 He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He sets them among princes, placing them in seats of honor. For all the earth is the Lord's, and he has set the world in order. 9 "He will protect his faithful ones, but the wicked will disappear

in darkness. No one will succeed by strength alone. 10 Those who fight against the Lord will be shattered. He thunders against them from heaven; the Lord judges throughout the earth. He gives power to his king; he increases the strength of his anointed one.” 11 Then Elkanah returned home to Ramah without Samuel. And the boy served the Lord by assisting Eli the priest.

1. Samuel succeeded Eli and turned the nation back to Him.