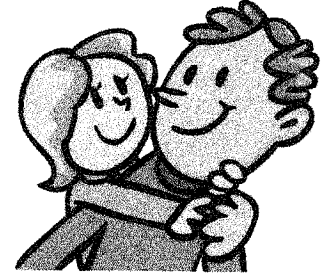


Sacred Life

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1. Introduction

- a. To ground the value of people solidly, we must find some basis or source of value, one that is objective, equally shared, stable, and comes from an authority above governments.
Declaration of Independence:
"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are *endowed by their Creator* with certain inalienable rights, among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men."
- b. The entire tradition of human rights in the world today sprang from this Judeo-Christian belief.
 - i. Luc Ferry: "Christianity was to introduce the notion that humanity was fundamentally identical, that men were equal in dignity—an unprecedented idea at the time, and one to which our world owes its entire democratic inheritance. But this notion did not come from nowhere."¹
- c. Yet here we encounter a question: what is the image of God?
 - i. Reason, free will, and moral capacities?
 - ii. Rule? Over earth, animals.
 - iii. Relationship with God and others?

2. The image of God is...

- a. *Jesus is the image of God, our pattern and paradigm. Human beings made in God's image are beloved royal children of God by nature who are meant to enjoy relationships with God and his family and reflect his virtuous character while sharing dominion in creation with the family. This is the Royal Family view.*²
- b. Your worth cannot be calculated.

¹ Luc Ferry, *A Brief History of Thought: A Philosophical Guide to Living*, Original edition. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2011), 60.

² This is from James E. Schultz, *The Real Royal Family: The Image of God in Scripture and Ethics* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, forthcoming in 2021).

3. So we have an argument for the pro-life view called the sanctity of human life argument:
 - a. Premise 1: The fetus is a human life from the moment of conception.
 - b. Premise 2: Every human life is sacred.
 - c. Premise 3: If the life of an individual is sacred, then the individual has a right to life.
 - d. Conclusion: The fetus has a right to life from the moment of its conception.³

4. Do you ever wonder what pro-choice defenders think of that sanctity of life argument against abortion? Let's see.
 - a. David Boonin, *A Defense of Abortion*:
 "If one believes that God stands in a special relation to every human being from the moment of conception, then this might provide firm support for the conclusion that each life has the sort of value that makes ending it morally impermissible. One might hold, for example, that each of our lives is a gift from God, so that it is God's place, and not ours, to decide when any life (including our own) should end. Or one might believe that all humans were created in God's image, and that killing any human would thus amount to a kind of attack against God [citing Pope John Paul II]. If sanctity is understood in this religious sense, then, there is good reason to suppose that someone who assents to P2 [every human life is sacred] will also affirm P3 [the individual has a right to life]."⁴

5. Is this image of God idea useless with pro-choice people?
 - a. 77% of Americans believe God created us.⁵
 - b. According to Pew Research, 52 percent of Democrats identify as Christians, while 79 percent of Republicans do.⁶
 - c. Some pro-life apologists even recommend bringing up the sacredness/sanctity of life, with all its religious connotations, to non-Christian secularists with whom this is not common ground. Why? To show how we have in our worldview resources for grounding human value that they sorely lack. A cosmic accident does not have the same value as a child of God.

6. Conclusion.

³ David Boonin, *A Defense of Abortion* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 28.

⁴ David Boonin, *A Defense of Abortion* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 28-29.

⁵ Megan Brennan, "40% of Americans Believe in Creationism," *Gallup.Com*, last modified July 26, 2019, accessed January 20, 2021, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/261680/americans-believe-creationism.aspx>. 40% believe in creation, another 33% combine creation and evolution, and the other 22% believe evolution without God.

⁶ Paul Bond, "'Woke' Christians Are Eroding Trump's Base and Dividing the Evangelical Church," *Newsweek*, last modified October 1, 2020, accessed January 20, 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/woke-christians-are-eroding-donald-trumps-base-dividing-evangelical-church-1534720>.