

FELLOWSHIP NOTES – JANUARY 9th, 2022

“Choose Life”

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

Everyone Should Chose Life because...

1. Scripture repeatedly shows that life comes from God and begins at _____, not birth - Job 10:8-9; 31:5; Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139: 13-16; Luke 1:30-31.
2. God has always hated the shedding of _____ blood – Genesis 9:5, 4:10; Deut. 19:10; Psalm 82:3; Proverbs 31:8-9, 24:11.
3. God has always valued all _____ – Psalm 127:3-4; Luke 18:16; Matthew 18:1-6; 10-15; Exodus 4:11; John 9:3

Choose to Learn More

Resources Available Today:

Attached: Biblical Perspectives on Unborn Children

Brochure at the Welcome Center: How Can I Help Unborn Babies and Their Mothers?

Brochures/articles at the Tower in the Lobby:

Finding Forgiveness and Freedom After Abortion
Abortion in the Bible and Church History
Questions From a Middle Schooler About Pro-Life and Pro-Choice Issues
Find Your Fit in Foster Care

In Fellowship Café:

Books: Unplanned

Safe in the Arms of God: Truth From Heaven About the Death of a Child

Help Her Be Brave: Discover Your Place in the Pro-life Movement

Birth Control, Infertility, Reproductive Technology, and Adoption

Booklet: Healing After Abortion: God’s Mercy is for You

Online:

Book: (download at www.epm.org for \$1.00) Pro-Choie or Pro-Life? By Randy Alcorn

Message: Youtube: “Albert Mohler: The Sanctity of Life”

(A brief history of abortion in America)

Movies: Unplanned

Websites/Email Updates:

www.epm.org (Eternal Perspective Ministries)

www.lifemattersww.org

Growth Group Study Guide – January 9th – 15th

Getting Started: Read the attached article “Biblical Perspectives on Unborn Children.” Mark anything that strikes you as significant. Did something in particular stick out to you? (For example: at what point a person is created by God; Scripture’s references to people in the womb; where the incarnation of Christ took place; the early church’s teaching on abortion; contrasting God’s view of children with modern society’s.)

Digging Deeper:

1. A real life situation: Your friend is pregnant. She’s told by her doctor, “Tests show the fetus has a disease that causes deformity. It will probably live no more than a few weeks after birth, and if it does it will never be able to walk, talk, see or have a normal life. I recommend you terminate the pregnancy.”

a. What would you tell your friend? Why? (Some verses that might help: Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6; Exodus 20:13)

b. On the issue of the child’s handicaps, how do the following verses help you to respond further? (Compare: Exodus 4:11; Isaiah 45:9-11; John 9:3; Luke 14:13-14)

2. What do these passages tell you about what God calls us to do when innocent lives are threatened?

a. Proverbs 31:8-9

b. Psalm 82:3-4

c. Proverbs 24:11-12

3. What does God say to the person who has taken a life or committed any other sin? (What does a person need to do to experience what these passages offer?)

a. Psalm 103:10-14

b. Proverbs 28:13

c. 1 John 1:9

d. Romans 8:1

6. Recent statistics indicate that nearly one in five women who get abortions identifies herself as an evangelical Christian. Does this surprise you? Why do you think abortion happens so often in the church?

7. James 5:16 says, “Confess your sins to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” Of course, not all sins need to be confessed in a growth group, but they *do* need to be confessed to God, and often he leads us to share with others as part of our healing process, and to use us to comfort others with similar hurts (2 Corinthians 1:3-7). If you have had a personal or family experience with abortion, and if you think God is leading you to share it with your group, please do so. (*There will be no pressure put on anyone to share—this is entirely optional.*)

Biblical Perspectives on Unborn Children

The Bible teaches human beings are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27; James 3:9). Not just Adam and Eve, but each individual since has been personally created by God (Malachi 2:10). Personhood is never measured by age, stage of development, or mental, physical, or social skills (Exodus 4:11).

Can we tell the moment of each person's creation by God? Science offers a clear answer that perfectly complements the teaching of Scripture. Dr. Alfred M. Bongiovanni, professor of obstetrics at the University of Pennsylvania, states, "I have learned from my earliest medical education that human life begins at the time of conception. I submit that **human life is present throughout this entire sequence from conception to adulthood** and that any interruption at any point throughout this time constitutes a termination of human life." Speaking of the early stages of a child's development in the womb, Professor Bongiovanni says, "I am no more prepared to say that these early stages represent an incomplete human being than I would be to say that the child prior to the dramatic effects of puberty is not a human being. This is human life at every stage."

Dr. Jerome LeJeune, genetics professor at the University of Descartes in Paris, states, "after fertilization has taken place a new human being has come into being." He says this "is no longer a matter of taste or opinion. **Each individual has a very neat beginning, at conception.**"

Professor Micheline Matthews-Roth of Harvard University Medical School argues, "**It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception.**"

Every indication is that the moment of each person's creation is the moment of his conception. Before that moment the individual (with his unique DNA) did not exist, and from that moment he does.

The Bible gives theological certainty to this biological evidence. Job graphically described the way God created him before he was born (Job 10:8-12). The person in the womb was not *something* that might become Job, but *someone* who was Job, simply **a younger smaller version of the same man**. To Isaiah God said, "This is what the LORD says: he who made you, who formed you in the womb" (Isaiah 44:2). Isaiah was not just a "potential person" but **an actual person** while in his mother's womb.

Psalms 139:13-16 paints a graphic picture of the intimate involvement of God with a preborn person. God created David's "inmost being," his soul, not at birth but before birth. David says to his Creator, "You knit me together in my mother's womb." **Each person, regardless of his parentage or handicap, has been personally knitted together by God in the womb.** All the days of his life have been planned out by God before any have taken place (Psalm 139:16).

Every person sinned "in Adam," and is therefore a sinner from the moment his life begins (Romans 5:12-19). David says he was not simply a sinner from birth, but "sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51:5). Who but an actual person can have a sin nature? Rocks, trees, animals, and human tissue do not have moral natures. Morality can be ascribed only to a person. **That there is a sin nature at the point of conception proves there *must* be a person present at the point of conception.**

When Rebekah was pregnant with Jacob and Esau, "The *babies* jostled each other within her" (Genesis 25:22). The word "babies" is the same Hebrew word used for already-born children. Hosea 12:3 says "In the womb he [Jacob] grasped his brother's heel; as a man he struggled with God." It was the same Jacob in the womb, younger and smaller, who was later the man who struggled with God. The Lord tells Jeremiah, "before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet" (Jeremiah 1:5).

Luke 1:41 & 44 refer to the unborn John the Baptist, who was at the end of his second trimester (sixth month) in the womb. The word translated “baby” in these verses is the Greek word *brepheos*. It is the same word used for the already-born baby Jesus (Luke 2:12, 16) and for the children brought to Jesus to receive his blessing (Luke 18:15-17). It’s also the same word used in Acts 7:19 for the newborn babies killed by Pharaoh. **To the writers of the New Testament, like the Old Testament, whether born or unborn a baby is a baby, a person is a person.** The preborn John the Baptist responded to the presence of the preborn Jesus, when Jesus (judging by the time it would take Mary to get to Elizabeth) was no more than ten days beyond his conception (Luke 1:41). Since implantation doesn’t begin until six days and is not completed until ten, it is probable that Jesus was not even fully implanted in his mother’s womb when the preborn John responded to his presence.

Scripture says Mary “was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.” The angel told Joseph, “what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 1:18-20). **To be pregnant, even at the very earliest moments after conception, is to be with child,** not simply with what might become a child.

In light of the full humanity of the preborn child, we must do nothing to take his life (Exodus 20:13). Furthermore, we should do all in our power to protect his life (Proverbs 24:11; Proverbs 31:8-9). Except in those cases where God has specifically delegated the right to take human life (e.g. capital punishment or defending the innocent), **God jealously maintains his sole prerogatives over human life and death** (Deuteronomy 32:39; 1 Samuel 2:6). To take that power into our hands is literally to play God.

Child sacrifice is condemned in Scripture. Only the most degraded societies tolerated this evil, and the worst of these defended and celebrated it as if it were a virtue. **Scripture condemns the shedding of innocent blood** (Deuteronomy 19:10; Proverbs 6:17; Isaiah 1:15; Jeremiah 22:17). While the killing of all innocent human beings is detestable, the Bible regards the killing of defenseless children as particularly heinous (Leviticus 18:21; 20:1-5; Deuteronomy 12:31). The prophets were outraged that some Jews sacrificed their children. They warned it would surely result in the devastating judgment of God on their society (Jeremiah 7:30-34; Ezekiel 16:20-21, 36-38; 20:31; compare 2 Kings 21:2-6, 16 with 2 Kings 24:3-4 and Jeremiah 15:3-4).

Christians throughout church history have affirmed with a united voice the humanity of the preborn child and the duty to protect him. The second-century *Epistle of Barnabas* speaks of “killers of the child, who abort the mold of God.” *Barnabas* treats the unborn child as any other human “neighbor” by saying, “You shall love your neighbor more than your own life. **You shall not slay a child by abortion.** You shall not kill that which has already been generated” (*Epistle of Barnabas* 19.5).

Christ’s disciples failed to understand how valuable children were to him, when they rebuked those who tried to bring them near him (Luke 18:15-17). Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

The biblical view is that **children are a blessing and gift from the Lord** (Psalm 127:3-5). Modern society treats children as inconveniences and liabilities—the less of them the better. We must learn to love children as does God, who “defends the cause of the fatherless” (Deuteronomy 10:18). He calls on us to do the same: “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked” (Psalm 82:3-4).

It is clear what Bible-believing Christians should *think* of abortion. As we contemplate what we should *do* about it, we might begin with the words of our Lord Jesus: **“Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me”** (Matthew 25:40).