

The Sanctity of Life

By Elder David Wise (2021)

Introduction

One of the most relevant and important topics in the world today is the sanctity of human life. The word of God establishes that all human life is sacred and has inherent value bestowed upon all men and women because we are made in the image of God. Scripture affirms the personhood of the baby in the womb, and that life begins at conception, graciously bestowed by the Giver of life, Almighty God. Therefore, since life begins at conception, it is wrong to take the life of the unborn innocent baby in the womb in the same way it is wrong to take the life of a young child or adult. The taking of another human's life against their will is murder, and that applies to babies in the womb, elderly persons in a nursing home, and everyone in between. There are some exceptions where not all killing is murder, such as self-defense of yourself or your family, defense of your country in war, the government bearing the sword by means of death penalty, and similar circumstances. Except for these exceptions, it is wrong for one person to take the life of another human. The word of God upholds the sanctity of all human life, and there is no reason for one's innocent life to be taken by the decisions or actions of another.

When we discuss the "sanctity" of human life, let us first define our terms. "Sanctity" means "holiness; state of being sacred or holy; sacredness; solemnity" (Webster's 1828 Dictionary). Therefore, we mean that all human life is "sacred" because man is made in the image of God and created by our Creator God. All human life is given inherent value and is sacred or sanctified by God because the Lord has given that value of life to all mankind. Any infringement upon the sacredness of human life is an infraction against the God who bestowed that life upon his creation. We have gotten to the point in America where almost no life is sacred. It is unfortunately not surprising because of the prevalent teaching of evolution that makes a human no different than any beast or animal, except for the supposed millions of years of evolution. Then, on the other end of the spectrum, many even place more value or sacredness upon the life of animals than upon human life, particularly of the innocent life of unborn babies.

America has departed from our founding principles of the sanctify of all human life. In the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence we state: "*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*" The founders of America in 1776 understood that it was "self-evident" that all humans have "certain unalienable rights that were endowed by their Creator". They understood the inherent value and sacredness of life was endowed upon all men because they were created in the image of God. All humans have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. However, our babies have their unalienable Creator-endowed right to life taken away by the actions of others, as their life is taken from them, and they will have no ability to pursue happiness. The *Roe vs. Wade* Supreme Court decision in 1973 took away not only the right to life, but the right of pursuit of happiness for millions of unborn babies.

The church of Jesus Christ must defend the innocent lives of these unborn babies because they cannot defend themselves. Jesus Christ is "the life" so to be "pro-life" is to be "pro-Christ". The church must be unapologetically "pro-life" and "pro-Christ" to speak up for these unborn babies who have their lives stripped from them by the vile decisions of others. The people of God must vehemently defend the sanctify of human life in all forms, in the womb, on the death bed, and everywhere in between. Man was made in the image of God, and we must defend the sacredness of all human life by defending the rights of those who cannot

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defend themselves, especially of the unborn babies in the womb. This is tantamount to defending the presence of God among us in fleshly form.

God, The Giver of Life

All life comes from God. Life did not evolve randomly in this world. The theory that the complexity of all human, animal, plant, or any other life in this earth could evolve randomly by chance is foolishness and ignorance gone to seed. There is a reason the Bible unequivocally calls those who reject there is a God a "fool" (Ps. 14:1-3, 53:1-3). There is nothing more "foolish" than to openly reject the marks of an Intelligent Designer and Creator of our universe that is so intricately complex. The Bible leaves no doubt as to the origin and source of life in this universe, especially the source of human life. There is light because God commanded "*Let there be light*" and there was light (Gen. 1:3-5; Note: there was light on the 1st day even before God created the Sun and Moon on the 4th day). There is a firmament in the heavens because God created it (Gen. 1:6-8). There are plants, grass, and trees because God gave life to those plants to bring forth fruit and seed (Gen. 1:9-13). The sun, moon, and stars are in the universe because God created them and set them in the heavens (Gen. 1:14-19). There are birds, aquatic and land animals, and all other living animals because God gave them life and ability to reproduce after their kind (Gen. 1:20-25). Then, finally, there is human life because God created man in his own image and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (Gen. 1:26-31, 2:4-7). "*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*" (Gen. 2:7) "*The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*" (Job 33:4) All life on this earth was certainly created and sustained by God. The rejection of this fact would deny the plain teaching of the Bible and scripture.

In addition to living creatures, all the creation in this world comes from God. Nothing has been created in this world without God making it. "*All things were made by [the Word]; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*" (John 1:3) The greatest among his acts of creation is life itself. Jesus himself is "the life" (John 11:25, 14:6). Thus, it makes perfect sense that life was given in creation by Jesus Christ, presented also as the Word of God. "*In [the Word] was life; and the life was the light of men.*" (John 1:4). As with the original creation, in the world today all life is given by the Creator God who giveth to all life, breath, and all things. "*Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things;*" (Acts 17:25) God did not just originally give life and breath to man, but even now, God still sustains the life of every creature on his earth. Even now, God still gives every breath to all of mankind – both elect and non-elect, good and bad, big and small, male and female; God gives breath to all of mankind and holds the soul of every living thing in his hand. "*In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*" (Job 12:10) God's life-giving Spirit sustains the breath in the nostrils of all mankind. "*All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils;*" (Job 27:3) In addition to breath, the very soul and spirit of man was given and is upheld by his power. "*Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein.*" (Isaiah 42:5)

The discussion of the sanctity of human life has its basis and authority in Genesis 1 in the Bible. The scriptures affirm the true creation account which clearly tells us that God is the source of all that was created. Creation and life did not randomly happen or randomly evolve in this world. Life was given to all creation by a Creator God. We must first understand that all life is sacred because God has given that life and only God has the right to take away that life. Particularly human life is sacred because it is given by God, every breath we take is given and sustained by God, and since man is made in the image of God, we

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don't have the right to take the life of other humans. When we accept the lie of evolution which comes from the devil, we begin to treat other humans according to the false assumptions that theory promotes; we treat humans just like beasts. Humans are not beasts. Man is a special creation with life endowed with value because we are made in the image of our Creator God.

Created in the Image of God

The sanctity of human life comes from man being created in the image of God. In creation, God also gave life to the fowls, fishes, and animals as well. Why then is it wrong to take the life of a man, but not so regarding beasts (animals)? Because, as we have stated, man was made in the image of God. *"26) And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... 27) So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* (Gen. 1:26-27) While it is a fact that God created all life, he chose to give life to man in a distinct, more intimate way than the rest of his creation. God gave man life by breathing into Adam's nostrils the breath of life. *"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."* (Gen. 2:7) If it were so that man evolved from base animals or primates, then there is nothing more sacred about the life of a human than the life of any beast, fowl, fish, or plant. The reason why there is a "sacredness" and inherent value to human life is because we are made in the image of God.

Since we are made in the image of God, the Lord gave man dominion over all the animal kingdom and authority to eat of all fruit, herbs, and plants in the garden of Eden (Gen. 1:28-31). Later after the flood, God told Noah it was appropriate to eat of every animal and every plant they desired to eat (Gen. 9:3). However, there was a severe prohibition for eating man's blood or taking man's life because he was made in the image of God. *"3) Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. 4) But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. 5) And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6) Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."* (Gen. 9:3-6) Clearly, God makes a distinction between taking an animal's life to eat and taking a human life, shedding the blood of the man who was made in the image of God.

Man has an eternal soul because we are made in the image of an eternal God. Beasts are not created in this way, and thus do not have eternal souls. When they die, their spirit ceases to exist and just goes back down into the earth. *"Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?"* (Eccl. 3:21) Therefore, it is not inherently wrong to take the life of an animal for need. That doesn't mean we have the right to abuse animals. We don't need to kill animals just for sport or cruelty. No, we treat animals in an honorable way and don't purposefully mistreat them or kill them for no reason – *"A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast"* (Prov. 12:10). However, even if we kill an animal unjustly, we have not sinned against God. That is why people are not arrested for killing a squirrel to eat with their stew for supper. We respect and honor the life of animals, but it is not an offense to God or contrary to the natural laws of man to take the life of an animal. A wicked, cruel, or selfish motive in killing a beast is an affront to God but not the taking of the life in itself.

The Bible draws a clear distinction between the sanctity of the life of man versus the life of beasts or other animals. If that distinction is removed, then there is no difference between how we treat humans and how we treat animals. That is one of the principal reasons why the theory of evolution is so dangerous. If we believe that man just evolved from animals instead of being created with inherent value and sanctity bestowed on us by our Creator, then the murder of a man or a young child is no different than killing a

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beast. It is not inherently wrong to kill animals, but then if we kill a man, then apparently there is nothing wrong with killing a man either. By evolutionary standards, the only difference between man and other organisms is just time and chance. That is why the devil has promoted the vile theory of evolution so vigorously because it debases man's inherent value bestowed upon him by the Creator God.

In America, our general culture is so confused and corrupted that those who promote evolution and humanistic theories actually seem to place more value on the life of animals and plants than human life, particularly the life of unborn innocent babies. An atheist who hates God will condemn businesses who might endanger some rare bird or other beast while putting in a pipeline, but yet the same person would whole-heartedly endorse the legalized murder of innocent babies by abortion. The atheist will try to "save the rain forest", placing more value on the plants in the rain forest than the sanctity of innocent life of unborn babies. Truly, our culture has been turned over to a "reprobate mind" when there is more outrage over five baby eagles or the rain forest being endangered than the unchecked, legalized slaughter of millions of babies in abortion. Our culture has rejected that man is made in the image of God because it has rejected the biblical creation account in Genesis. Thus, there is diminished distinction between the sacredness of human life and some regular beast in the wild.

God Forms the Child in the Womb

Now that we have established the sanctity and inherent value of all human life being made in the image of God, let us consider specifically the life of children in the womb. Is there actually human life prior to the completion of the birthing process? The Bible makes it unequivocally clear that life begins at conception. That child in the womb is a person known intimately by God, possessing identity and personality, even in the mother's womb. God is intimately involved in not just the giving of the initial life to the child in the womb, but all the aspects of the child's formation and growth in the womb.

In Psalm 139, King David describes the intimate knowledge that God has of all his creation. There is nowhere that we can go to hide from the omniscient all-seeing eye and knowledge of our God. This psalm also directly addresses God's intimate knowledge of the child in the womb. *"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb."* (Ps. 139:13) God has covered and known David, and all of mankind, in his mother's womb. *"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."* (Ps. 139:14). This intimate knowledge should lead us to extol and praise the name of God because truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made. *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth."* (Ps. 139:15) God intimately knows our "substance", literally meaning "bones". In David's day, this was long before sonograms enabled us to see some of the physical development of the child in the womb. Even with biological advancement and knowledge, it is still a great mystery how life is given in the womb and even how the bones of a child grow in the womb of their mother. *"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."* (Eccl. 11:5) David was made "in secret" (concealed from public view) in the lowest parts of the earth in his mother's womb. Even at the lowest and most basic part of the earth, the child right after conception, God "curiously wrought" ("to weave or embroider") our substance together. God figuratively "sews together" the bodies, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and bones for every child in the womb.

God "sees" every single child in the mother's womb, even before anyone else (even the mother) knows their substance even exists. *"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* (Psalm 139:16) God saw "my substance, yet being unperfect". That phrase is translated from a Hebrew word

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(golem) that literally means “an embryo”. Notice at the most basic stage of human life, when David was still biologically an “embryo”, that collection of cells that God had given life was still David. “I” (David) was made in secret; “I” was curiously wrought in the womb; “I” am fearfully and wonderfully made (v.14); That embryo was “my substance” (v.15,16); God covered “me” and “my reins” in the womb (v.13). That embryo was David. All children begin as an embryo, but that embryo is a person at conception, just like David was in his mother’s womb. Again, God knows every single one of those children in the womb. God knew David so intimately that even in that embryonic stage, he wrote all David’s members in his book, even prior to his physical body being fully fashioned.

We see many references to God’s “tender mercies” towards his people, particularly in the Old Testament. For example: “Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.” (Ps. 25:6) The Hebrew word (racham) is used 44 times in the Old Testament; it is translated 11 times as “tender mercies”. This word means “compassion or love in the womb; tender love for a fetus”. Therefore, God’s “tender mercies” literally describe God’s “love of a fetus”. God values all his children from their conception in the womb. Does a mother begin to love her child only after they are born? No, of course not. That mother tenderly loves the child in their womb from the moment they find out they are expecting. God tenderly loves and values his creation in the same way, from our conception in the womb. While there is certainly a distinction between the covenant love of the elect and the care God takes for all babies in the womb, this shows that God cares for all children at conception as a fetus.

Notice these many other verses that describe God “forming” or “fashioning” and creating the child in the womb of the mother:

- “Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?” (Job 31:15)
- “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” (Jer. 1:5)
- “Thus saith the Lord that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen.” (Isaiah 44:2)
- “Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.” (Isaiah 44:21)
- “Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself;” (Isaiah 44:24)
- “Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.” (Isaiah 49:1)
- “And now, saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob again to him, Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength.” (Isaiah 49:5)
- “As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.” (Eccl. 11:5)
- “13) For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. 14) I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. 15) My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. 16) Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect;

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and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” (Psalm 139:13-16)

- *“The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.” (Job 33:4)*
- *“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Gen. 2:7)*

Personhood of the Child in the Womb

The core discussion of the sanctify of life for babies in the womb is: “Is that child a person before they are born?” The Bible leaves no doubt as to the answer to that question. As we have discussed, Psalm 139 gives intimate details of the child in the womb. Was David’s testimony in Psalm 139 unique in scripture? Certainly not. The concept of the personhood of the unborn child is clearly affirmed in the Bible. Other examples of personhood in the womb in scripture:

- *“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” (Ps. 51:5)*
 - Again, David was himself at conception, and a sinner by nature at conception. David did not “become me” when he exited his mother’s womb. No, the Holy Spirit affirms through David that he was “me” at conception.
- *“9) But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother’s breasts. 10) I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother’s belly.” (Ps. 22:9-10)*
 - David had a relationship with God – “thou art my God” – from even in his mother’s belly in the womb. Just like John the Baptist, it appears that David was probably born again in his mother’s womb. For him to be born again, David had to be a natural man before he could be regenerated into a spiritual man.
- *“Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb?” (Job 31:15)*
 - Job was “me” in the womb, and we are also “us” in the womb, being made and fashioned by our Creator God. It is evident that the same person who Job was after birth was the same person while in his mother’s womb.
- *“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.” (Jer. 1:5)*
 - God intimately knew Jeremiah before his birth. God formed and ordained” thee” (Jeremiah) in the womb, not just a clump of cells. God sanctified and ordained Jeremiah as a prophet before he was fully born. God acknowledged Jeremiah as a prophet before he even came forth out of his mother’s’ womb. Not only was Jeremiah a person, but he was also already a person with a job assignment in the womb.
- *“Or as an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.” (Job 3:16)*
 - Those babies who die from a miscarriage (a hidden untimely birth) who never saw the light of day are still called “infants”. The Hebrew word here for “infants” means “a suckling, babe, young child, infant, or little one”. There is no distinction in scripture between the baby in the womb (even the miscarried baby) and the small infant out of the womb.

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- *“And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the Lord.”* (Gen. 25:22)
 - Jacob and Esau were still in the womb of their mother, but they were “children” in their mother’s womb. This Hebrew word for “children” is used 4,932 times in the Old Testament to describe children, sons, and infants. Again, there is no distinction in scripture between a child inside and outside of the womb because life and personhood begin at conception.
- *“And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.”* (Luke 1:36)
 - Elisabeth had already conceived “a son” in her womb, even though she was in the sixth month of her pregnancy, still three months before John’s actual birth.
- *“41) And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42) And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43) And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44) For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.”* (Luke 1:41-44)
 - Elisabeth acknowledges that “my Lord” is residing the womb of Mary (v.43). Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary was not just an embryonic clump of cells. That child in Mary’s womb was the Lord of Elisabeth and of all the earth.
 - John the Baptist in his mother’s womb was considered a “babe” – Greek “brephos”: “an infant (properly unborn), literally or figuratively; babe (young) child, infant”. This word is used commonly in the New Testament to describe newborn babies, infants, and children. There is no distinction in scripture between a child in the womb of his mother and a young child playing in the streets.
 - John the Baptist leaped for joy in his mother’s womb. Joy is a fruit of the Spirit and also an emotion. Leaping in this context was an emotive activity. Clumps of cells have no emotions. Obviously, John had emotion and activity in the womb because he was a child in the womb.
 - See the next section for a more detailed treatment of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ and the words used in that account.

Example of John the Baptist & Jesus Christ

Let us consider the example of John the Baptist and then Jesus Christ in the womb of their mothers. Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, were old, well stricken in years, and she was barren. Zacharias is told by an angel that they will have a son. The angel gives much information about John’s birth and ministry and notes that *“he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother’s womb”* (Luke 1:15). John the Baptist was born again by the Holy Ghost in his mother’s womb. He later leapt for joy (Luke 1:44; a fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22) at the salutation of Mary and Jesus, showing fruit that he had been born again in his mother’s womb. For God to quicken John to spiritual life in the womb, he had to first be fully given natural life. For John to be made a spiritual man by the Holy Ghost in regeneration, he first must have been made a natural man by conception. John was clearly not just a bunch of cells, but he was a natural man in his mother’s womb, actually born again by the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost told Mary that she would conceive a son that is actually the Son of God. Mary is told that Elisabeth has already conceived “a son”, being six months pregnant. *“And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.”* (Luke 1:36) Elisabeth had already conceived “a son” in her womb, even though she was in the sixth month

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of her pregnancy, still three months from John's actual birth. *"Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son."* (Luke 1:57) Later, when Elisabeth did give birth to John, the same son that had been conceived in her womb was "brought forth". Elisabeth did not have a son when John was physically born. She had already carried a son for nine months. At birth, her son was just "brought forth" and manifested to the world.

Note the account when Mary arrives at Elisabeth's home. *"41) And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42) And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43) And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44) For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy."* (Luke 1:41-44) John the Baptist at six months of age in his mother's womb is described as a "babe" (Greek "brephos": an infant (properly unborn), literally or figuratively; babe (young) child, infant). There is no distinction in scripture between a "babe" in the womb and an infant or young child after birth. Consider these other usages of "brephos" in the New Testament:

- *"12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the **babe** wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 16) And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the **babe** lying in a manger."* (Luke 2:12,16)
 - Same word "babe" is used to describe Jesus as a newborn infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laying in a manger.
- *"And they brought unto him also **infants**, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them."* (Luke 18:15)
 - Same word is used to describe the "infants" that were brought unto Jesus and he touched them.
- *"The same dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young **children**, to the end they might not live."* (Acts 7:19)
 - Same word is used by Stephen to describe the "young children" that were murdered by Pharaoh as all the newborn babies were attempted to be killed by the Egyptians.
- *"And that from a **child** thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."* (2 Tim. 3:15)
 - Same word is used to describe Timothy being taught the word of God by his mother and grandmother from a "child".
- *"As newborn **babes**, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"* (1 Pet. 2:2)
 - Same word is used to describe a "newborn babe" (a nursing infant) in a figurative sense, comparing to a new, immature, but growing new convert to the church.
- It is the clear the Bible makes no distinction between the age of the child and whether they are inside or outside of the womb. All babes, infants, or children are viewed the same by God and their lives all have the same inherent value bestowed by their Creator God, made in the image of God, whether that babe has exited the womb yet or not.

The Holy Ghost also gave Elisabeth a knowledge of who Mary was carrying in her womb, even though at this point most likely no one outside of Mary knew that she had conceived. *"42) And [Elisabeth] spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. 43) And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"* (Luke 1:42-43) Elisabeth first acknowledged that Mary had "fruit of thy womb" residing in her. This all happened very quickly in Luke 1.

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Mary was told she would have a child by the Holy Ghost in Luke 1:26-38, and right after that *“Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste”* to see Elisabeth (Luke 1:39). Therefore, maybe just a few days after she was told that the Holy Ghost would conceive in her, she is now expecting. We aren't given a time frame, but it seems to be to just be a few days, or a few weeks at the longest. It is very possible that Jesus Christ in Mary's womb was a little child though recently conceived as a days or weeks old embryo. Additionally, not only was “fruit” in her womb, but Elisabeth professed that “my Lord” was residing in the womb of Mary (v.43). Though Jesus was just a few weeks gestational age at the most, Elisabeth proclaimed by the Holy Spirit that the child in Mary's womb was “my Lord”. He was not just Elisabeth's Lord but the Lord of all heaven and earth. It is a great mystery how the great God of heaven could even be in this basic biological, embryonic state, but such is the great *“mystery of godliness”* (1 Tim. 3:16). It is a great mystery how God could be manifest in the flesh at all. How could the great, sovereign God of heaven and earth, the Lord of lords, and King of kings could be residing in the womb of a young lady from Nazareth? Truly, great is the mystery of godliness indeed!

Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary was not just an embryonic clump of cells. That child was the Lord of Elisabeth and of all the earth. Mary was *“found with child of the Holy Ghost”* (Matt. 1:18). What was in her womb at the moment of conception? What was she found with? A “child”. Mary was *“great with child”* (Luke 2:5). The angel even quotes the Old Testament prophecy: *“Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”* (Matt. 1:23). Again, is Mary “with cells” in her womb? No, the virgin Mary was “with child”. The virgin would “bring forth a son”. Just like with Elisabeth, you can only bring forth in birth what you already have in your womb. Mary “brought forth” a son because she already had a son (the Son of God) in her womb. Both John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, along with all these other scriptural proofs that we have examined, leave no doubt on the question of when life begins. Life begins at conception, and immediately there exists a child, a babe, a son or daughter, ultimately a human life residing in the womb of the mother.

Biological Development of the Baby in the Womb

Scripture makes it abundantly clear that the child in the womb is a baby at conception made in the image of God. The biological development of the baby in the womb supports this scriptural position. The Bible spoke of natural and even biological concepts in great detail long before we had enough scientific knowledge to discover these things. The same is the case with the biological development of the child in a womb. The scriptures were inspired and penned during a time when none of this biological information was known. Yet, the Bible still speaks with great precision on these matters having been inspired by the God who knows everything in this universe and even in the womb. As the old saying goes, give science a couple of hundred years, and it may eventually catch up the Bible.

Let us consider some important benchmarks for a baby's development in the womb. I do not believe anyone could consider this information in an unbiased manner and reach any other conclusion than the baby in the womb is a person, and therefore has the same legal rights to life as any other person outside the womb.

- At 5-6 weeks old after conception, a baby's heart starts to beat, and his heartbeat is detected on an ultrasound.
 - Therefore, a heartbeat is detected when the child is still in the embryonic stage and before it is considered a fetus at 8 weeks.
 - If a life is considered ended with the cessation of the heart's beating, the same heartbeat should at the least be a sign of life's beginning. However, even prior to the beginning of the heartbeat, the development and organization of the embryo

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into an individual being is evident. The embryo is obviously developing the structures required to support that soon-to-be-beating heart, as well as the tissues and structures to be fed through its designed abilities. Yes, a living human, though in rudimentary fashion, exists prior to the heartbeat.

- Even though this child is still considered an “embryo” scientifically, God used a Hebrew word (golem) to describe his knowledge of David as an embryo, long before science even knew what an embryo was.
 - Consider again what we have already written: *“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”* (Psalm 139:16) God saw “my substance, yet being imperfect”. That phrase is translated from a Hebrew word (golem) that literally means “an embryo”. Notice at the most basic stage of human life, when David was still biologically an “embryo”, that collection of cells that God had given life was still David. “I” (David) was made in secret; “I” was curiously wrought in the womb; “I” am fearfully and wonderfully made (v.14); That embryo was “my substance” (v.15,16); God covered “me” and “my reins” in the womb (v.13). That embryo was David.
- At 8 weeks old, the embryo is now scientifically considered a “fetus”. Baby’s eyelids and ears are forming, and they can begin to hear noises outside the womb. Their upper lip and nose are starting to take shape.
 - God had knowledge of all his people when they were in the scientific stage of a “fetus” as well, in his “tender mercies”, long before science even knew what a fetus was.
 - Consider again what we have already written: We see many references to God’s “tender mercies” towards his people, particularly in the Old Testament. For example: *“Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.”* (Ps. 25:6) The Hebrew word (racham) is used 44 times in the Old Testament; it is translated 11 times as “tender mercies”. This word means “compassion or love in the womb; tender love for a fetus”. Therefore, God’s “tender mercies” literally describes God’s “love of a fetus”. God loves all his children from their conception in the womb.
- At 9 weeks old, the baby’s arms can bend at the elbow. His toes are forming.
 - The baby now has elbow joints and toes that are forming. That means his bones have begun forming in the body. God told us about the bones forming in the womb long before we visualized anything about those bones by an ultrasound or x-ray.
 - *As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.*” (Eccl. 11:5) We don’t even know today the full extent of how bones grow in the womb, but that mystery is fully known to God who directs the development of the baby in the womb.
 - *“My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.”* (Ps. 139:15) God intimately knows our “substance”, literally meaning “bones”. God knows the bones of every person in the womb.
- At 10 weeks old, many of the baby’s body systems are already in place.
 - Even at the lowest and most basic part of the earth, the child right after conception, God “curiously wrought” (“to weave or embroider”) our substance together (Ps. 139:15). God

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figuratively “sews together” our bodies’ ligaments, muscles, tendons, and bones together for every child in the womb.

- At 14 weeks old, the gender of the baby can be identified.
 - God ordained that man would be created “male and female” (Gen. 1:27). Gender is not a choice; gender is the creation of God. The 14-week-old baby bears that mark of his/her Creator since gender can be determined. Even at this stage of a fetus, the baby is made in the image of God and his/her gender as assigned by God is identifiable.
- At 24 weeks old, a baby can survive outside the uterus.
 - At this stage, a baby is developed enough to survive on its own outside the womb without being dependent upon the mother to live. Clearly, a baby at this point is a person, essentially like a full-term baby, that can survive outside of the womb.

We could give many more examples from weeks 25-40 of the baby’s development, but just these early developmental benchmarks clearly prove our point. I don’t think anyone could consider a baby that has a heartbeat at 5-6 weeks; bones, limbs, and facial development and hearing ability at 8-9 weeks; major bodily systems developed at 10 weeks; gender identification at 14 weeks; and ability to survive outside the womb at 24 weeks and conclude that he is not a person with a right to life to not be slain by the decisions of others. If it is wrong to kill a baby after birth, it is just as wrong to kill a baby prior to his birth. Again, his biological development proves there is no difference between a baby inside and outside of the womb.

Shedding of Innocent Blood

Scripture has clearly shown that life is sacred and valued because every human is made in the image of God. As proven earlier, God’s word also makes it plain that life begins at conception. Let us now consider the taking of that innocent child’s life by the decisions of others. While all of mankind are sinners “by nature” and conceived in sin (Ps. 51:5), the children in the womb have not actively committed sin, as opposed to mature people outside the womb. The baby is not yet a sinner “by practice”. Therefore, we can say the baby in the womb is the “most innocent” persons in the entire universe. Unfortunately, we have condoned the shedding of those babies’ innocent blood by the choice of others taking their life. Scripture makes it abundantly clear just how detestable the taking of innocent life through abortion is in the sight of God.

We are given a listing of abominable things that the Lord hates. Third in that list are the “hands that shed innocent blood”. *“16) These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17) A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,”* (Prov. 6:16-17) The wicked are characterized by not just a desire to hurt the innocent but an aggression and speed to “make haste” to shed innocent blood. *“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.”* (Isaiah 59:7) The wicked entice others to attack the innocent with them, shedding innocent blood without a cause. *“10) My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. 11) If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:”* (Prov. 1:10-11) The throne of iniquity gathers together against the righteous and condemns (seeks to injure or harm) the innocent blood. *“20) Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? 21) They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood.”* (Ps. 94:20-21) The wickedness of this world is characterized by a lust to shed innocent blood, and God absolutely hates it.

Accordingly, God put provisions in his law to protect innocent blood from being shed, to protect the righteous from the wicked. Those who shed innocent blood would be judged harshly and lose their own lives because

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they had taken innocent life. *“10) That innocent blood be not shed in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so blood be upon thee. 11) But if any man hate his neighbour, and lie in wait for him, and rise up against him, and smite him mortally that he die, and fleeth into one of these cities: 12) Then the elders of his city shall send and fetch him thence, and deliver him into the hand of the avenger of blood, that he may die.”* (Deut. 19:10-12) God’s standard is clear: those who shed innocent blood should be judged severely. The death penalty prescribed for such in the Mosaic law bears evidence of this severity.

God led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, bringing them out to inherit the land of Canaan. However, he warned Israel to not be enticed by the false gods and the false worship of the Canaanites they would be conquering. One defining action of the Canaanites’ false worship was offering their children as burnt offerings to their false gods, particularly offering their children by burnt human sacrifice to Molech. *“And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the Lord.”* (Lev. 18:21; Lev. 20:2-5) These children did not actually “pass through the fire” but were consumed in the fire burnt up in horrible misguided false worship to Molech. *“Thou shalt not do so unto the Lord thy God: for every abomination to the Lord, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.”* (Deut. 12:31)

Despite God’s warning, the Israelites did fall prey to this false worship and began to offer their children to pass through the fire to Molech. *“And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.”* (Jer. 7:31) Even in Israel’s early days in Canaan, they did not destroy the nations as God commanded. Consequently, they began to worship false idols, sacrificing their sons and daughters to devils (Ps. 106:34-37). God’s people had somehow gotten so confused thinking that their Lord would be happy and honored by them offering their firstborn in human sacrifice for their transgressions. *“7) Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8) He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”* (Micah 6:6-8) Ahaz, king of Judah, partook of the abominations of the heathen and made his own son to pass through the fire. *“But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel.”* (2 Kings 16:3) Later, Manasseh, followed Ahaz’s wicked example and *“shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another”* (2 Kings 21:16). Also see Jer. 7:31-35; 19:4-9; 32:32-37; Ezek. 20:26; 36:18-20; and unfortunately, a multitude of other references in the Old Testament to this heinous practice by Israel.

God’s chosen people chose to rebel against the prohibition by God to not shed innocent blood, and God condemned them harshly for it. Ahaz shed innocent blood by human sacrifice in Judah. Manasseh shed innocent blood very much till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other with innocent blood (2 Kings 21:16). God would not overlook Judah’s sin; God would not cover or pardon their sin but judged them harshly for their wickedness in shedding innocent blood. Manasseh’s pervasive, unchecked shedding of innocent blood was the absolute last straw for the nation of Judah that God would not pardon. *“3) Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all that he did; 4) And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the Lord would not pardon.”* (2 Kings 24:3-4)

Israel and Judah sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils. *“37) Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, 38) And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.”* (Ps. 106:37-38) Notice the severity of the judgment that God poured out on them for their sin. This shows how much God

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hates and abhors the shedding of innocent blood. God “abhorred his own inheritance” in his chosen Israel. God allowed the enemies of them to overrule and to oppress and destroy them. *“40) Therefore was the wrath of the Lord kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. 41) And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. 42) Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand.”* (Ps. 106:40-42)

God’s people had chosen to forsake God. They engaged in idolatrous worship, culminating in offering their innocent children in fire for human sacrifice. *“4) Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; 5) They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: 6) Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.”* (Jer. 19:4-6) Due to Judah’s sin, they would be slain by their enemies, their carcasses would be eaten by the buzzards, and the city would be destroyed, desolate, and an astonishment. *“7) And I will make void the counsel of Judah and Jerusalem in this place; and I will cause them to fall by the sword before their enemies, and by the hands of them that seek their lives: and their carcasses will I give to be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth. 8) And I will make this city desolate, and an hissing; every one that passeth thereby shall be astonished and hiss because of all the plagues thereof. 9) And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of his friend in the siege and straitness, wherewith their enemies, and they that seek their lives, shall straiten them.”* (Jer. 19:7-9).

Notice the severity of this judgment in Jer. 19:9. The Israelites willingly killed their innocent babies in false worship to false gods. Then, God would send such severe judgment upon Jerusalem that in the destruction of Jerusalem by Babylon in 586 BC and again in 70 AD by the Romans that they resorted to eating the flesh of their own children, the same children that they killed and offered to Molech (Lam. 2:20, 4:10). This was prophesied as the judgment and payment for their disobedience to reject God and his commandments and serve other false gods, and particularly to kill their own children in human sacrifice (Deut. 28:53-57, Lev. 26:29). God removed all joy and gladness from the land because of this shedding of innocent blood. *“31) And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart. 34) Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate.”* (Jer. 7:31,34)

It might be easy to read these accounts and think that Israel’s sin doesn’t apply to us. We don’t bow down and worship graven images; we don’t have high places; we don’t commit human sacrifice. We need to examine ourselves, and especially the church, more closely. America (and Christians in America too) is an idolatrous nation. Our idols are not graven images, but money, sports, politics, recreation, and most importantly “self”. Although abortion in America is not a sacrifice on the altar of Molech, it is usually a sacrifice on the “altar of self”. The mother puts a higher value on her convenience than the life of her unborn baby. Millions of babies are sacrificed every year on the “altar of self” in this world. We are just as guilty before God as Israel of old. We have consented to the shedding of innocent blood. God is not mocked. We will fully reap what we have sown. God absolutely hates the shedding of innocent blood, and God’s chosen people are not exempt from judgment for these sins. If we condone the shedding of innocent blood, we cannot expect God to look over that sin. Our judgment will be harsh with dreadful severity.

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Women's Right to Choose

In the discussion of abortion, the argument is often framed as “pro-choice” versus “pro-life”. Well, obviously God’s people should be “pro-life” as we are “pro-Christ” with him being “the life”. To be “pro-life” is simply to be “pro God”. The defense of the life of the unborn should be one of the hallmarks of Christ’s church in this world. The mother’s right to “her choice” to end the life of her baby has never been her choice to make. The mother certainly has a right to make medical decisions that are the best for “her body”, both in pregnancy and at any other time. However, we must clearly understand that the baby in her womb is not “her body” to do with as she pleases. The mother is carrying the body of another person inside of her body. Her child in the womb is another person altogether with his own unalienable rights.

In a legal sense, one person’s rights end where another person’s rights begin. You don’t have the right to take property that doesn’t belong to you to steal because your right of choice would then violate the ownership rights of others to their own personal property. You don’t have the right to injure (and certainly not murder) someone else because your rights and freedom reach their limits when your choice violates the rights of another person. Therefore, once we lay the clear scriptural foundation that the child in the womb is a baby, a person, a human made in the image of God with sacred rights endowed upon them by their Creator, the mother does not have the right to violate the rights to life and well-being of the baby in her womb. The mother has no more right of “choice” to end the life of that baby than she has the right to “choose” to end the life of an adult. If someone chooses to end the life of another person, it is murder. To be “pro-choice” is simply to be “pro-death” and “pro-murder”.

Notice the provision in the Mosaic law to defend the life of the unborn baby. *“22) If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman’s husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23) And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life.”* (Exod. 21:22-23) If a man physically assaulted a pregnant woman which caused a miscarriage of that baby, he would be judged by the elders. He would be required to pay “life for life”. If he was purposefully assaulting this pregnant woman which caused the death of the unborn baby, then he would lose his life for causing the death of the baby. This was not just a part of the woman’s body. This was an entirely distinct “life” residing in the womb of the mother protected by the law. If anyone caused the loss of that life, he would pay by losing his own life.

Though God owns the bodies of all men, Christian or otherwise, by his right of creation, the Christian should heed this truth with greater gravity. For the child of God, our bodies are not our own; they are temples of God, bought and paid for by the blood of Jesus Christ. We are not our own, and we do not have the right to do fully as we please with our bodies anymore. We have to answer to Almighty God for how we use our bodies that have been bought and paid for by Jesus Christ. *“15) Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. 17) But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. 18) Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. 19) What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20) For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.”* (1 Cor. 6:15-20) Certainly, we must use our purchased bodies to glorify God who bought them, not to end the life of unborn babies. Perish the thought.

One of the core issues here is that, through abortion, the mother is actually not sinning against her own body. She is sinning against the body of her innocent baby. *“16) Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 17) If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”* (1 Cor. 3:16-17) All human beings, whether inside or

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outside the womb, are the creation and image of God. If we destroy that image-bearer, we are in danger of God destroying us in turn. For a believer in Jesus Christ, there is no excuse for committing the sin of abortion. It is not the mother's choice to end the life of her baby any more than it is my choice to end the life of my fellow man. Our choice to end the life of another human is the same whether inside or outside of the womb; it is murder.

Abortion is Murder

Again, scripture affirms that to end the life of another person, whether inside or outside of the womb is murder. There are some exceptions where not all killing is murder, such as self-defense of yourself or your family, defense of your country in war, the government bearing the sword by means of death penalty, and similar circumstances. Except for these exceptions, it is wrong for one person to take the life of another human. Scripture makes it clear that we cannot kill other human beings. *"Thou shalt not kill."* (Exod. 20:13) As we have discussed, the reason why it is wrong to kill another human is because we are created in the image of God with inherent value, sanctity, and sacredness in our life. If we take the life of innocent man made in God's image, then we are transgressors in judgment of God (which in the Old Testament would result in you losing your own life). *"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."* (Gen. 9:6).

Yet again, we see God's attention towards the protection of the unborn life in the following precept in the Mosaic law. *"22) If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart from her, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23) And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life."* (Exod. 21:22-23) If a man physically assaulted a pregnant woman resulting in a miscarriage, he would be judged by the elders. He would be required to pay "life for life". In purposefully assaulting this pregnant woman causing the death of the unborn baby, the death penalty was prescribed. This was not just a part of the woman's body. This was an entirely distinct "life" residing in the womb of the mother, and if they caused the death of that life, they would pay by losing their own life. Thou shalt not take some else's life. Period.

How have we arrived at the point where it is culturally accepted to kill innocent babies in abortion? The answer is simple and yet very troubling: the wiles and deception of Satan. What is the origin of murder? The devil is *"a murderer from the beginning"* (John 8:44). Murder is of Satan. God gives life, and the devil takes life. Murder is a product of hating your brother (1 John 3:15) which came upon mankind through the fall in Adam. Murder and hatred come from the devil. Murder is a work of the flesh that is in direct contradiction to the fruits of the Spirit of God (Gal. 5:21). The non-elect are characterized by murder (Rev. 9:21, 21:8, 22:15). That is not to say that an elect person cannot commit this sin (such as David murdering Uriah), but that those who are still in their sins, unredeemed by the blood of Jesus are still in a guilty, condemned state before God as murderers. The wicked *"in the secret places doth he murder the innocent"* (Ps. 10:8). Murder is an attribute of a society that has changed the truth of God into a lie who worship and serve the creature more than the Creator (Rom. 1:21-29). When murder is openly accepted in a society, that is evidence that God has turned those people over to a "reprobate mind" to do those things which are not convenient. Satan has deluded our society to believe that this murder of innocent babies is acceptable when it is one of the things that God hates and detests the most.

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God's Mercy and Forgiveness

Taking the life of an innocent baby in abortion is a dreadful sin. However, as with all sins, there is mercy and forgiveness in Jesus Christ, even for abortion. The scriptures make it clear that abortion is equivalent to murder, but the blood of Jesus Christ covers all sins, murder included. There are some egregious sins listed in 1 Cor. 6:9-11: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate, sodomites, thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners. These sins (as well as murder) are black marks that we might think would remove someone from heaven or from the love of God. Even those that had previously committed those horrid sins were washed, purged, and justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. *"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."* (1 Cor. 6:11) In God's eyes, even he who hates his brother without a cause is a "murderer" in his sight (1 John 3:15, Matt. 5:22). In God's eyes, there are many more murderers in addition to those who have actively taken another's life. God judges murder down to the heart's motive, not merely by our external actions. Jesus died to pay "for sins", not for every sin but murder. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, murder and abortion included (1 John 1:7).

Even the man after God's own heart, King David, ordered the murder of Uriah the Hittite, but God forgave him of his sin – *"The Lord hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die"* (2 Sam. 12:13). God was merciful to forgive him of his sin so he would not face the death penalty required in the Mosaic law for murder. However, David did face severe consequences for his sins, first in seeing his death penalty paid for by his own infant son. As David had given great occasion of the enemies of God to blaspheme the holy name of God, therefore, the sword of judgment would never depart out of David's house. God allowed David's sons to raise up against him and his wives were defiled in public view. David lived the rest of his life in external turmoil because of his sins (2 Sam. 12:9-14). David had internal forgiveness of sins in his heart, but his external life was filled with sorrow by the effects of his sin. While there is forgiveness from God for our sins, that does not mean that God will remove the consequences of sin from our lives. God is not mocked; we will reap what we have sown. David sowed to the flesh and of the flesh he reaped corruption (Gal. 6:7-8). David did eventually find peace in his soul, feeling forgiveness of his sins. God did restore unto him the joy of his salvation (Ps. 51). However, David still suffered great turmoil in his family and in the kingdom due to his sins. There is forgiveness for the sin of abortion, but that does not mean that God will take away the consequences of that action. For the mother who has consented to the abortion of her innocent baby, God can give assurances of eternal peace and forgiveness to her soul when she confesses her sin. The gracious Lord can also remove many of the temporal penalties for her transgression, which he had in store for her had she continued in an unrepentant state. However, that does not remove the void and severe pain that sin causes in her life. Though she receives the blessed knowledge that God will not remember her sin in eternity, her own mortal mind will never forget. The promise of everlasting rest after a while in heaven, while glorious, cannot totally eradicate the confusion and turmoil that can trouble her mind here on earth.

Only a child of God will truly feel remorse for sin against God, including the sin of abortion. Therefore, there is not an open invitation for anyone to confess their sins and go to heaven. Only a born-again child of God that is already saved to heaven by the blood of Jesus will feel conviction of his/her sin and seek to confess those sins before God. God does not offer eternal life to those who choose to confess their sin. God offers peace and assurance in our souls (just like King David in Psalm 51) when we confess our sins before God. *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1 John 1:9) If those children of God who are living in a wicked way repent and return unto the Lord, God is rich in mercy and will abundantly pardon. *"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."* (Isaiah 55:7) Abortion is not the unpardonable sin. There is mercy

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and forgiveness in Jesus Christ for the convicted, repentant mother who has foolishly consented to the death of her innocent baby by abortion.

Defending the Innocent

God's people should be so in tune with the Spirit of God that we love what God loves, and we hate with a righteous indignation what God hates. God loves life, and we should love life. God hates murder and the shedding of innocent blood, and we should hate that too. If anyone is called to stand up for life and protect the life of the unborn, it must be the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The people of God are called to open our mouths for the dumb, those who cannot speak to defend themselves. *"8) Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. 9) Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."* (Prov. 31:8-9) The babies in the wombs cannot speak to defend themselves. Therefore, it is up to God's people to open our mouths, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the innocent babies in the womb.

The people of God are called to defend against the shedding of innocent blood, not to perpetuate it. *"Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place."* (Jer. 22:3) The church is to defend the disadvantaged and defend those who cannot defend themselves, particularly the unborn. *"3) Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. 4) Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked."* (Ps. 82:3-4)

In Exodus 1, the Pharaoh of Egypt issued a command to two Hebrew midwives to kill the male children born to the Hebrews. *"But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive."* (Exod. 1:17) These God-fearing midwives were committed to defending and saving the lives of those little newborn boys and disobeyed the king's command. God honored the midwives' civil disobedience of this murderous decree. *"20) God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and waxed very mighty. 21) And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses."* (Exod. 1:20-21) The midwives defended the lives of those babies, and God honored them by establishing and growing their "houses". If we want our houses to be strengthened and established in the midst of a wicked culture, we need to follow the godly example of these devout Hebrew midwives and defend the lives of little children as well.

Not only should the church condemn the murder of babies, but we also need to promote the blessing of having children. In the world, and even among some Christians, children are seen as a burden and ultimately a bad thing. Many young ladies have an abortion because they see this miraculous God-given life in their body as an inconvenience. Children are not an inconvenience but one of the greatest blessings that God can bestow in this world. The church needs to be championing the blessing of having children. *"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward."* (Ps. 127:3) Children are a heritage of the Lord. The fruit of the womb (including even the embryo in the mother's womb) is the reward of God to his people. The church not only needs to defend the life of the unborn but champion the blessing of having children, even when the circumstances surrounding the conception might be inconvenient or when there may be some risks involved to the mother. Let not your heart be troubled. Let us trust in God.

The Sanctity of Life

Conclusion

There is no gray area in scripture regarding the sanctity of human life. Scripture unequivocally affirms that life begins at conception, and all life is sacred and has inherent value bestowed upon that the child in womb by its Creator, made in the image of God. The taking of an innocent baby's life in abortion is murder. Period. Furthermore, the sanctity of human life is not just relevant to unborn babies. If we do not acknowledge the sanctity of all life bestowed by our Creator God, then society will also deem it acceptable to take the life of elderly persons who are seemingly less useful to society. All life is sacred, and we do not have right to determine that some else's life is not valuable or beneficial, whether a child in the womb or an elderly person in the nursing home.

Since the Supreme Court upheld *Roe vs. Wade* in 1973, we have condoned the abortive slaughter of more than 50 million innocent babies in America. As we zoom out and consider the world at large, the World Health Organization estimates there are 40-50 million abortions every year in the world. That equates to possibly 125,000 abortions daily worldwide. Read that again, and let the gravity of that number sink in. 125,000 acts of murder of innocent babies every single day. We have allowed the unrestricted perpetuation of an abomination that the Lord hates; we have legalized and supported hands to shed innocent blood. I feel that it has become such a black (dare I say scarlet, blood-stained) mark on our culture that we are just as justly condemned as Judah under Manasseh; millions of babies sacrificed on the altar of "self" and "convenience". We have allowed the shedding of innocent blood from one end of America to another.

There are many people who take Christ's name, claiming to be Christians, who support abortion, the mother's choice, and thus the murder of unborn babies. There is no middle ground for the Christian on this issue. Scripture leaves no gray area. The child in the womb is a baby, and killing that baby is murder. When we attempt to justify or reason away wickedness in this world, we are abominable in the eyes of God. *"He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord."* (Prov. 17:15) God pronounces a "woe" on those who call "evil good". *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"* (Isaiah 5:20) We *"hate the good and love the evil"* (Micah 3:2). We are in very dangerous territory when the church and Christians support the shedding of innocent blood through abortion. God is not mocked. We will reap what we have sown. Lord forgive.

We have to realize the gravity of our sins and repent. I may not have committed these sins firsthand, but we are all guilty before the Lord in a collective sense for allowing the freedom for wicked hands to perpetually shed innocent blood. Possibly in fear of political pressure the church has become too silent and passive on this crucial issue. Jesus called us (the disciples of Christ, the church) the *"salt of the earth"*, but right after that, Christ gave the caveat, *"but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men"* (Matt. 5:13) I cannot think of a more apt application of the salt losing its savour than the church's silence and complacency in abortion and the shedding of innocent blood. Jesus said that if we reach that point, then we are deemed fully unsavory and not good for anything but to be thrown out and cast under foot of men. If there is any issue where the church has to let our salt be the saltiest and our light be the brightest, it has to be in the defense of the sanctity of life.