

Sermon outline and notes prepared by:  
Pastor Stephen Felker  
Swift Creek Baptist Church, 18510 Branders Bridge Rd., Colonial Heights, VA 23834  
1/18/04

Psa. 139:13-16            “Abortion & Adoption: Death & Life”

Intro. Today is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. The reason this day is observed as sanctity of human life Sunday is that this is the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision that legalized abortion in 1973. The Supreme Court based this decision on an alleged right to privacy, and on the same basis, they recently ruled that states cannot outlaw even homosexual acts. The decision of the Supreme Court has greatly increased a terrible problem in our world. Innocent blood is being shed hour by hour. I am not referring to the innocent blood shed at the hands of the terrorists. I am referring to abortion. So this morning I am going to share an entire message on the subject of abortion. But I will not focus just on abortion. I will also discuss the most important prevention of abortion, as well as the alternatives to abortion. I hope you will understand the seriousness of what I will share today, and listen carefully.

First of all, consider with me:

## I. THE BIBLICAL TEACHING CONCERNING ABORTION

Even though the word “abortion” is not found in the Bible, the Bible is not silent on the issues relating to abortion. For example, we should consider:

A. The Uniqueness of Human Life – This is foundational, and this is where many are wrong in their approach. If naturalistic evolution is true, then man is just another animal, the only difference is we are more advanced. Therefore, there are animal rights activists who battle to save a species of fish, or try to get you to stop eating meat, but do nothing to save unborn humans. But the Bible teaches that all things were created by God, and man was God’s special creation. Gen. 2:7 says, “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 being.” Adam no longer was just a mass of material compounds, but a living, breathing, and thinking person. Even more significant, back in Gen. 1:26-27, we read that we are unique in that we as humans are made in the image of God. In v.26 God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Then Moses wrote in v.27, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him....” When God created Adam in His image, He distinguished human beings from the animal kingdom by breathing into their bodies the breath of life, and human beings alone were created in the image of God. Being made in the image of God gives human life its sacredness. And through the process of human reproduction, this life is transmitted from generation to generation in an unbroken chain.

B. The Prohibitions Concerning the Taking of Human Life - Ex. 20:13 gives us one of the 10 commandments: “You shall not murder.” The Hebrew term does not refer to all types of killing, as in the case of the killing of an animal for food. The term specifically refers to murder and the taking of *innocent* human life. And even before the 10 commandments were given, God had said in Gen. 9:6, “Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God

He made man.” The reason is clearly given why the taking of innocent human life is far more serious than the killing of animals, for only humans are made in the image of God. Even before that, in Gen. 4:10 God says concerning the murder of Abel, “The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground.” God did not ignore the murder of Abel, and He will not ignore the bloodshed of millions of aborted babies.

So we have seen that human life is special; it is sacred. And the unjust taking of human life is murder, and a very serious offense in the eyes of God. Now, we must move a step further to demonstrate:

C. The Unborn Baby Is a Human Life - Justice Blackmun, who supported the court's decision to legalize abortion said, “We need not resolve the question of when life begins.” But that is exactly what the court has done. The Roe vs. Wade decision means that in the eyes of the Court, life begins at birth and not before! But when you die, you will not stand before the Supreme Court of the U.S. as your judge. You will stand before God. So we should not base our moral decisions on what the Supreme Court says, but upon what the Judge of all the Earth says! So let's address the question, “Is an *unborn* baby a human life, created in the image of God?”

1. Scriptural Indications - Psa. 139:13-16a is one of the best texts relating to the unborn (read). The psalmist refers to himself 10 times in his unborn condition with the personal pronouns. He clearly declares his personhood while yet in his mother's womb. David expressed the comprehensive nature of God's involvement in his formation by saying that God “created” or “put together”<sup>1</sup> his inmost being. The word translated “inmost being” is often translated as “kidney” or “heart” as the seat of emotion. It could refer to his mind, spirit, and personality. And when it says, “You covered me in my mother's womb” the word translated “covered” can mean “knit” or “weave together.” Each fiber, each sinew, each organ was woven together with the others to make David a complete human being. God brought together all the necessary components for David's life. In v.14 he praises God for the wonder and miracle of the development of human life in the womb. In vv. 15-16 we see that God is interested in the unborn child.

Another important text is Isa. 49:1, which says, “The Lord called Me from the womb; from the body of My mother He named Me.” In Jer. 1:5 God says to the prophet, “...And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.” And the development of John the Baptist in the womb of his mother Elizabeth is most instructive. In Luke 1:15 it says that John was “filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.” The filling of the Holy Spirit comes only to persons, and not mere cells & tissue. Furthermore, Luke 1:41 says that after Mary, the mother of Jesus spoke, John leaped in his mother's womb! Elizabeth was at least 6 months pregnant at this time. By the way, doctors know that an unborn baby can hear, and even respond. Also, I believe it is worth noting that Dr. Luke uses the word “babe” to describe John as an unborn baby. That same word is used elsewhere in the New Testament of a newborn baby (Lk. 2:16), and even used for a “young child” (2 Tim. 3:15). Thus, the Bible makes no distinction between the humanity and personhood of the born and the unborn. Can anyone rationally conclude that the unborn child is not a human being?

There is at least one text where God decrees the protection of the unborn from harm. Look at Ex. 21:22-25 (read). This text has been used to prove just the opposite, but a careful and correct translation can be very helpful here. The law is describing a pregnant woman who is struck in the

---

<sup>1</sup> The basic meaning of the word translated “created” is “get” or “acquire.” Franz Delitzsch (*Biblical Commentary on the Psalms*, p. 350) notes that the word does not mean “to acquire” in the sense of “purchase” but rather “to put together.”

process of a fight between two men. Perhaps she tried to come to the aid of her husband. Then the law gives two scenarios. The first is that “she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows.” Literally, it simply indicates that the unborn child “came out.” The NASB interprets this to refer to a miscarriage, while the NIV & NKJV interpret it to refer to a premature birth. I believe it is the latter. So on the one hand, suppose the fight causes her to go into an early labor, but the baby and mother turn out to be OK. In that case, only a fine is to be given. But if she goes into early labor, and the baby dies, and/or the mother dies, then the offender is subject to his own life being taken. That shows the seriousness of doing anything that brings harm and death, even to the unborn.

Yet, some will say, “Well, that is just what the Bible says. Don’t push your religion upon us, or use it as a basis of forming public policy.” In response, I want to say that there is not only Scriptural evidence of the personhood of the unborn, but there is also:

2. Physical & Scientific Evidence - Before the end of the first month there is a beating heart and the eyes and other organs are developing. Brain waves can be detected by the end of the fifth or sixth week. By 6-9 weeks the baby already has its own unique fingerprints. A 12 week-old unborn baby is only about 2 inches long, yet every organ of the human body and every attribute of a human being is already developing in place. Tiny fingers and toes, the intricately formed ears and nose, the arms and legs are firmly in place. The baby reacts to touch, kicks, makes fists, and sucks its thumb. Furthermore, psychiatrist Thomas Verny says that the baby, soon after conception “possesses enough self-awareness to sense rejection.” So a pre-born baby is even aware of their mother’s attitude toward them. The pre-born do hear, feel, and respond.

The “pro-abortionists” are wrong when they tell young women that the so-called fetus is nothing more than a protrusion or a growth that is part of their body. Scientists and doctors know that once conception takes place, a separate & distinct human life begins. Jules Carles, Dir. of the National Center for Scientific Research in France stated that at the point of conception, “an autonomous and genuinely living being has come into existence.” At conception, all physical characteristics have been determined, and even many of the personality traits have been determined. Dr. John Warwick Montgomery says that after conception, nothing else is added by the mother to make the baby any more human. All that remains is that the fully human baby grows and develops with the nourishment provided by the mother.

I hope you are convinced that abortion is the taking of innocent human life, and thus is morally wrong. Next, I want to deal with some practical steps toward dealing with the national problem of abortion, and how to prevent the incidents of abortion in our own lives. So let’s now focus on:

## II. THE PREVENTION OF ABORTION

A. Maintain Sexual Purity – I want to ask you a question. What percent of abortions take place within marriage? According to a 2003 report<sup>2</sup> only 7% of pregnancies within marriage ended in abortion, while 40% of unmarried pregnancies ended in abortion. So the vast majority of abortions result from ending the unpleasant result of an immoral sexual relationship. If you have sexual relations only within marriage, you will avoid putting yourself in a situation where there will be great pressure to have an abortion. This will deal with the root of the problem. The so-called freedom to practice abortion is a corollary of the sexual revolution. Abortion was legalized soon after the sexual revolution began. Feminists protest that they have the right to “control their own bodies.” If they would only control their bodies before becoming pregnant, there would be no need

---

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Health Statistics.

for abortion. Promiscuity and self-indulgence is the problem. And you young men have a responsibility here as well! Do you realize that in a recent (Dec. '03) Barna poll of 18-19 year olds, 54% said that sex outside of marriage was morally acceptable behavior. Almost the exact same percentage (55%) said that abortion was morally acceptable. 50% said that pornography was morally acceptable. 75% said that cohabitation was morally acceptable. If there was some way to reverse the current rejection of biblical, sexual morality, we could prevent a million abortions/year.

So restoring a biblical, sexual morality in our society would go a long way toward ending the abortion holocaust. But we must do more. After all, even in a cultural and church environment that frowns on sex outside of marriage, people are still human, and some will fail to exercise self-control. So we must be prepared to take another step in this battle to save the unborn:

B. Choose Life for Your Child – The fact is, even Christians give into temptation and pressures, and have sex outside of marriage. And due to good intentions, Christian youth may be more likely to have unprotected sex when they do yield to temptation. And so pregnancy can & does happen to unmarried Christian young people. So what should a young woman do when she finds out that she is pregnant outside of marriage? Many will counsel her to get an abortion. Your first responsibility is always to accept the consequences of your actions. Don't destroy another human life in an attempt to avoid the consequences of your indiscretion. If you ever face this decision, please give that baby a chance for life. Choosing life for your child is really the only choice for the Christian. And even though abortion is still legal, remember this: just because something is legal does not make it moral! I will share in just a moment what your options are after you make the fundamental choice of life for your baby.

### III. THE ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION

Though there are occasional hardship cases, the vast majority of abortions are for convenience, just to make life easier for those who would be impacted by a pregnancy. That does not even come close to justifying the taking of innocent life. So what are the options to abortion? We need to be involved in giving or receiving counsel regarding these options. There are two:

A. Provide Love & Support for Those Who Will Keep Their Babies - No woman should have an abortion because she does not believe she can be cared for during her pregnancy. The parents of a teen-age daughter should provide forgiveness, love, and support for their pregnant daughter, even though they do not condone the sexual activity that led to the pregnancy. Churches and Christian individuals have begun special homes and Crisis Pregnancy Centers, which offer love and financial assistance for any mother who is willing to carry her baby to delivery. One of the ministries that our church supports is this local ministry. See our bulletin insert. Through counseling, many women have decided to choose life over the death of abortion. As you give to the church budget, part of your offering goes to the ministry. We also encourage you to pray for this ministry, and even volunteer your time to work with this ministry.

So as long as there is good, strong support from the parents of the baby's mother, then keeping the child may be God's will, even for a teenage mother. This is especially true if the baby's father will be supportive during pregnancy & during the child's life. And we should always be ready to help people follow God's will. But if these conditions do not exist, then I would encourage a second option:

B. Consider Adoption – Especially for the young, unwed mother, I believe usually the first and best alternative is to give your baby an adopted home. Some have a negative attitude toward adoption, but it should not be. Giving a baby up for adoption can be a very loving thing to do, and in the best interest of all involved. Following God’s plan of producing children within a loving, life-long marriage is what’s best, but once you have missed God’s best, then adoption can be the 2<sup>nd</sup> best option for all involved. And there are several reasons for this.

1. The Availability of Good, Loving Homes - There is hardly such thing as an “unwanted baby.” There are thousands of loving families who fervently desire to adopt a baby, but they are frustrated because of the small number of children available for adoption. What a blessing these parents would be to a child! Most all of these parents would provide much love and many advantages to these children. Many of these children can become great leaders for tomorrow. Abortion not only denies life to a baby, but it deprives many would-be parents from adopting a child.

2. Adoption Can Be Better for the Baby - Especially in the case of a teenage unwed mother, I believe placing a child up for adoption is better for the baby. When a young unwed mother does this, she is not rejecting her baby; she is showing great love for her baby. She knows that her baby will have the opportunity to grow up in a home to parents who are far more mature, and usually better able to give financial and educational advantages. The child will be more likely to grow up in a 2 parent home. That is God’s plan. He created Adam and Eve, not just Eve. Psychological studies have confirmed the advantages of growing up in a stable, two-parent home. A good father can make an important contribution to the child's emotional and physical well-being. I just read the other day that in the inner city, a child that is raised in a 2-parent family has about a 7-9% chance of juvenile delinquency, while those who grow up in a 1-parent home have about a 90% chance, at least in that inner-city environment.

I have known of some very successful people who were adopted, and turned out very well. Moses was adopted, and raised as a prince in Egypt. Jesus was adopted by Joseph. Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy’s, was adopted. Our own Colonel Bunch was adopted, and is today serving our country in Iraq, leading 4,800 troops. So adoption can indeed be the best option for the benefit of children that need another home.

3. Adoption is Often Better for the Mother – Teen mothers who keep their babies usually have a difficult time continuing their education, or even graduating from High School. Teen mothers usually have to go on welfare, or struggle financially with low-paying jobs. Often they are not emotionally mature enough to handle the pressures of parenthood. So adoption is better for the mother as well.

While I was pastor of my previous church in Cedartown, GA, I became personally aware of this issue of adoption. A young couple in my church became parents to their first-born son. But 5 days after the birth, the mother began to hemorrhage from the womb. They rushed her to the hospital. After many hours of trying to stop the bleeding, the doctors decided that the only way to save her life was to perform a hysterectomy. Of course, that would mean that the couple could not have any more children biologically. That couple was Steve & Cheryl Felker!

Soon, some tried to console us with words like, “Well, you can always adopt children.” We may have taken some comfort from that for a while, but as we checked into adoption, we found that the waiting lists for adoption agencies were 6 and 7 years or more. It involved a good bit of paper work and fees, with no certainty of getting a child. We checked into some other possibilities, including international adoption, but I decided that it would be best to pray, and leave it in the Lord's hands. Perhaps the Lord did not want us to have any more children, and so we resigned

ourselves to the will of God.

When Andrew was getting near the age of 3, I went to my 10 year H.S. reunion. One of my old Christian friends was there. We had known for some time that he & his wife were also unable to have children. They had been seeking adoption for years. Soon after our discussion, they received the good news that they would be able to adopt a child from an adoption agency in Texas. But listen to this: at about the same time, this couple had received word from a Christian lawyer that a young lady had decided to give her baby an adoptive home. My friend agreed to accept the baby from the adoptive agency, which seemed a more sure possibility for a baby. So he asked if Cheryl and I were interested in adopting this other child. We could hardly believe this was happening! We realized that God was answering our prayers. But then, we began a 2 or 3 month wait. Would she go through with the adoption? Would she even change her mind and get an abortion? Would she keep the baby? Cheryl & I had a peace about it during the wait, because of our faith in the Lord.

So on Aug. 18th, 1985, when David was just about 48 hours old, we took him home from the hospital. He came into our home in a special way, in answer to prayer. We had not even applied to any agency for adoption. Many times we have explained to him that he is God's gift to us, special delivery.

But what moves me as much as anything is to think that if Planned Parenthood, or some other death agency, had gotten to that birth-mother, David could have been killed in the womb before he even had a chance to live! My family would have been deprived of countless joys and laughter that David has brought into our home. Abortion must be stopped, because God's patience with such sin will not continue forever!

Conclusion: My message today may have disturbed someone who has had an abortion. While I do not minimize the seriousness of abortion morally, I must remind you that God is willing and ready to forgive, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Jesus forgave the woman at the well, and the woman caught in adultery. God forgave David in spite of his adultery and murder. God's grace is greater than our sin. All you need to do is to repent of what you have done, and receive God's full and complete forgiveness.

So the first step in receiving forgiveness is to repent of your sin, and trust in Jesus as your Savior. He died for you on the cross, and paid the full price for your sin. Then, you need to make that decision public. Do it today! I think it would be great if some made commitments to sexual purity this morning. Others need to commit to supporting pro-life efforts in our community. This message from the Word of God will profit only if we respond with faith and obedience.

Sources: E.J. Daniels, "*Abortion! America's Holocaust...*"; Barrett Duke, "I Am Fearfully and Wonderfully Made," a Bible study of Psa. 139:13-18 in *Light*, Nov/Dec. 2003; Larry Lewis, "*What the Bible Teaches About Abortion*"; Larry Pierce, *Online Bible* [CD-ROM] (Ontario: Timnathserah Inc., 1996). Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from *The New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1982).



## ABOUT THESE SERMON NOTES

This document has not been transcribed from an audio recording, but is the result of the sermon preparation process. Most outlines are original to the author, but much of the content of the notes are taken from commentaries, other sermons, and Bible study aids (see sources above). Sermons are preached without notes, and thus the content of the “live” sermon is in the author’s own words. To get an audio recording of this message, you may send \$1 for each audio cassette tape ordered, plus \$3 shipping & handling for each order mailed in. Up to 2 messages come on each cassette. Make checks payable to Swift Creek Baptist Church, P.O. Box 235, Colonial Heights, VA 23834.