

The Sanctity of Life

Intro:

1. The trivializing of life:
 - a. Boy shoots sister for talking too long on phone.
 - b. Man/son shot, dumped in river; truck stolen for bank robbery.
 - c. Convenience store clerks shot in back of head; on video.
 - d. Partial birth abortion. One may argue the principle of **when** life begins, but how does one come to jam scissors into the head of a baby and evacuate its brains?
2. Our country is suffering from moral meltdown; there is no respect for human life, no twinges of conscience for killing, maiming and otherwise abusing other people.
3. Congressional committees, university research, political think-tanks and other human problem-solving mechanisms will not solve the problem. It isn't a deficiency of *knowledge* but *notion* - how we choose to evaluate the significance and value of humanity.

1. Man - Created in God's Image

- A. The significance of man stated from the very beginning of Scripture: Gn 1:26-28.
 1. Collaboration among the Godhead as last of created life endowed with divine characteristics.
 2. "in Our **image**" - *eikon*, a derived likeness, deliberate reproduction, as the image of Caesar on the coin (Mt 22:20).
 3. "according to Our **likeness**" - *homoiosis*, resemblance to an archetype, but not necessarily deliberate or derived.
- B. This likeness transmitted via birth - God ==> Adam ==> Seth - Gn 5:1-3. The likeness was not negated by Adam's sin. Seth inherited the image of God by virtue of his birth.
- C. Gn 9:6 - Capital punishment for murder affirms the sanctity of life in God's image. There is an inherent difference between the killing of a 'possum and a man, but this distinction is being blurred by evolutionists and environmentalists.

2. Man - Object of God's Love

- A. Because we are *created*, we are loved by the Creator even though the image has been ruined and tarnished by sin.

- B. Ps 8:3-8 - “*What is man that You are mindful of him?*” We love our children even when too young to give anything back. We just wonder at their very *being*.
- C. People are more able to *give* love when they *receive* it. Hatred and mistreatment spew from those who first do not love themselves because they do not feel loved.

3. Man - Redeemed by God, Himself

- A. What establishes *value*? The price someone is willing to pay for an item. *Desire of possession* creates value. **Illus:** Princess Di’s clothes; Jackie O’s personal items.
- B. God paid for man *with His own Son* - Jn 3:16; Rom 5:6-8; 1 Jn 4:9-10.
- C. The **cross** is the ultimate expression of man’s value. If God sees value in us, then we must learn to see value in ourselves - and others.

4. Practical Applications

- A. The sanctity - or respect or honor - afforded to human life begins before murder. Proper regard will determine how we feel about, act toward and speak to people.
- B. Examples:
 - 1. Will not curse those in **similitude** of God - Jas 3:9-10. Not slander, gossip, insult but edify, encourage and praise. *We are so afraid to give praise!*
 - 2. Love those whom God loves - 1 Jn 3:16-18; 4:7-11; 4:20-5:1. This includes our enemies, for God loves His enemies - Mt 5:44-45.
 - 3. Deep concern for those redeemed by Christ - 1 Cor 8:11-12; Rom 14:15, 20. **And a deep concern for those not yet saved!** **Illus:** British man in wheelchair who rolled himself into water. Wanted to die; didn’t want to be saved. Later, *glad he was rescued!*
- C. We “conservatives” have focused so much on getting the “externals” right that we wouldn’t dare bring a piano into the building, but some don’t think twice about slandering their brethren.

Conclusion: We must not allow our cultural disregard for others rub off on us. **We** are infinitely valuable, and so are others. May we take comfort in how special we are to God and may we treat others accordingly because they are special to Him also.