

## THE VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

### 1. Evidence of Devaluation of Life

A. Fundamental shifts in perceived value of life have led to:

1. Abortion - A legal, funded, encouraged termination of life predicated on personal desire and convenience.
2. Doctor assisted suicides - Says a certain **quality** of life valuable, not life itself.
3. "Victim acquittals" - Murder is acceptable if the murderer can be classified as a victim; i.e., the Menendez brothers.

B. Causes:

1. Evolutionary explanation of life has matured. There are serious implications to the notion that man is merely a consequence of natural processes, and a lack of respect for humanity as a whole is one of the implications.
2. Our society has turned "liberty" into self-centered license.
3. A pervasive victim or special-interest mentality where perceived injustices become the pretext for personal gain at the expense of others.

C. All of these things combine to tell us that humanity is not all that important, and the "trickle-down" effect is the devaluation of life.

### 2. The Value of Life Established

A. Creation in the image of God:

1. Gn 1:26-28 - Divine collaboration among the Godhead as the last of the lives created take on some of the characteristics of deity.
  - a. "in Our **image**" - eikon, a derived likeness, a deliberate reproduction, as the image of Caesar on the coin (Mt 22:20). See this word used in I Cor 11:7.
  - b. "according to Our **likeness**" - homoiosis, resemblance to an archetype, but not necessarily deliberate or derived. See Jas 3:9 where the tongue cannot consistently bless God and curse that which God made in His likeness.
2. Gn 5:1-3 - God → Adam → Seth. The likeness was not negated by Adam's sin; instead, Seth inherited the image of God by virtue of his birth.

3. Gn 9:6 - Capital punishment for murder upholds the sanctity of life as life is made in the image of God.
- B. Jesus came in the “**likeness** of men” (Ph 2:7). Man was created in God’s likeness, but after man corrupted that likeness God “sent His Son in the **likeness** of sinful flesh” (Rom 8:3).
1. This very notion gave rise to false doctrines (gnosticism) which couldn’t accept that God would so condescend. But John declared, “every spirit that does not confess that Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God” (I Jn 4:3).
  2. To give up the position, privilege, and power of the Godhead to so live as a man places a great deal of value upon us.
- C. God **loves** His creation, even though the ideal has been ruined and the image tarnished.
1. John had touched God in the flesh - I Jn 1:1.
  2. God’s love for us sent Jesus into the world - I Jn 4:8-10.
  3. Sandwiched around these verses are the injunctions that we should love one another - I Jn 4:7, 11.

### **3. To Love Is To Save**

- A. The manifestation of God’s love for us was to make efforts to save us.
- B. How, then, shall we manifest our love for God and what He has made?
- C. “Personal evangelism” is a term which tends to obscure the root principle:
1. The people on this earth are precious to God, for they have been created in His image.
  2. We have a responsibility to love and honor these people and treat them accordingly because they are God’s - even when they aren’t very “loveable.”
  3. Many of these people whom God loves are dying in an alienated state from Him and stand eternally condemned. We are in a position to influence these people with the gospel.

**This is personal evangelism!** Illus: On British “Rescue” TV show a man in a wheelchair rolls himself into the water. He wanted to die, but in the end he thanked his rescuers for giving him another chance. We are asked to save people who don’t always want to be saved - **but we must give them the chance!** This is all we can do!