

Theme: Humans are uniquely the image of God and therefore all human life is sacred, from conception until natural death.

I. Intro - Sanctity of Life Sunday

- A. Celebrated by presidential proclamation under Reagan
- B. Many churches observe this regularly
- C. Why do we mean by speaking of the sanctity of life?
- D. Is human life really sacred? If so, why?

II. The Sanctity of Human Life: The Image of God

- A. Humans were created in the image of God
This is the written account of Adam's line. **When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.** ² He created them **male and female** and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man."
Genesis 5:1–2

Then God said, "**Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,** and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ **So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female** he created them. Genesis 1:26–27

- 1. Humanity is created in the image of God
- 2. The image of God is also called the likeness of God
- 3. Our text in Genesis 5 is quoting Genesis 1:26-27
- 4. Only humanity is created in the image of God
- 5. The image of God in humanity is complex

- a. Spiritual, moral, relational, & functional components
 - b. I have taught on this at least 9x - see the website
6. All creatures are important as the creation of God, but humanity alone is sacred as the image of God.

B. All humans are equally the image of God

This is the written account of Adam's line. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. ² He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them "man."
³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth.
Genesis 5:1–3

- 1. All humans are united in common nature - "man"
 - a. Adam, man (v1), man (v2), Adam (v3)
 - b. We are all "man" - not male, but humanity, Adam
 - c. We are all "in Adam" - a key doctrine in the Gospel
 - d. To deny any single human is the image of God is to deny every single human as the image of God
- 2. Both male & female specifically created in God's image
 - a. He created them male and female - v2
 - b. God made "man" as male & female - image of God
 - c. In a few weeks we will see how this & marriage have deep roots in the Trinity
- 3. All humans descended from Adam & Eve are the image of God
 - a. He had a son in his own likeness, his own image -v3
 - b. Uses image & likeness to link with Adam's creation

- c. Adam created in God's image - and passed this on
 - d. Note: begins with Seth because Seth's line is traced
 - e. Key point: the image of God is passed on - even after the fall
4. Again - to deny any single human is the image of God is to deny every single human as the image of God

III. Implications of the Sanctity of Human Life

A. All human life is inherently valuable

- 1. Humans are of inestimable worth because we are God's image - not because of something else
- 2. Our worth is not dependent on intelligence, stage of life, ability to contribute to modern society or anything other than the image of God in us
- 3. This runs directly contrary to our utilitarian culture that measures worth based on our ability to contribute - and thus denigrates the unborn, the newborn, the sick, the elderly, etc.

B. Human life is valuable from conception to natural death

- 1. Our human worth begins at the moment we become human - conception
 - a. Scripturally our identity, our sin nature, our call from God - all begin at conception, not birth
 - b. See Psalm 51:5; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Luke 1:39-45
 - c. There is also no scientific or rational place to begin humanity other than conception
 - d. Dr. Seuss had it right - a person is a person no matter how small! (Horton Hears a Who)

- 2. Our worth as God's image also extends to our natural death - not our time of "usefulness"
 - a. God planned out our days for us and we are not to purposefully cut them short - for ourselves or for others
 - b. See Psalm 139:16
- 3. For an individual to purposefully end human life after conception or before natural death is a full rejection of God's Sovereign plan

C. All forms of racism and sexism are patently unbiblical

- 1. There is really only one race - the human race
- 2. I am a Man - a historical protest against racism
 - a. The abolitionist movement medallion
 - b. Standing Bear to judge in 1879 - "I am a man. God made us both" - Ruled Native Americans were indeed humans
 - c. Civil rights movement - Memphis sanitation workers strike in 1968 - where MLK was assassinated
 - d. Rooted in the image of God - I am human like you!
- 3. Although men and women are distinct, they equally bear the image of God, and thus all forms of sexism are inherently unbiblical and fundamentally untrue.
- 4. A consistent pro-life stance is strongly against racism & sexism, and a consistent anti-racist or anti-sexist stance is avowedly pro-life

D. We are to love, respect, honor, and care for all human beings - even those trapped in various forms of sin and error

1. Many humans today deny the very image of God
2. Many today deny the essential fact that God made us male and female
3. Many humans worship false gods or even deny the existence of God
4. But these still bear God's image and we must not curse them

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. James 3:9–10

5. We must treat even those who attempt to undermine and destroy the very image of God with respect

And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. ²⁵ Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will. 2 Timothy 2:24–26

6. If we engage in the demeaning dialogue that characterizes much cultural discourse today, we are actually denying the image of God in the other person.

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I believe and act like every human life is sacred?

1. Do I believe the image of God is the basis of worth?
2. Do I know nothing can add to this basic worth?
3. Do I know this extends from conception to natural death?
4. Our culture is laboring to undermine these ideas
5. Do my words and actions to others reflect the sanctity of life?
6. Am I willing to be ridiculed - or worse - to protect the sanctity of life?

B. The sacred Table

1. This Table reminds us that redemption was worked by the God-Man
2. Salvation depends on the Image Bearer, the 2nd Adam
3. Thanks be to God that He took the sanctity of human life so seriously!
4. We come to the Table to remember the sacrifice of the God-Man who bore the image perfectly
5. We come confessing when we have sinned against the image of God
 - a. Abortion - repent and receive forgiveness
 - b. Euthanasia - repent and receive forgiveness
 - c. Racism or sexism - repent and receive forgiveness
 - d. Speech that demeans other humans - repent and receive forgiveness

The Sanctity of Human Life

Genesis 5:1-3

January 22, 2017

Communion

Psalm 134:3

Teaching keywords: Image of God; humanity; abortion

May the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion. Psalms 134:3

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