

**“Choose Life!”**  
***The Sanctity of Human Life and the Gospel***

**Introduction:**

Sunday, January 23 marked the 49<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a monumental decision handed down by the Supreme Court on January 22, 1973 in a case known as ***Roe vs Wade.***

It all began in 1969 in Texas when a 21-year-old high-school dropout who was divorced and homeless found herself pregnant for the third time. She gave up her first two babies for adoption. This time her adoption agency connected her with two lawyers looking for a plaintiff in a case they were hoping to file that would challenge the Texas law that made abortion illegal. She fit the bill perfectly, and to protect her identity she became known as “Jane Roe.”

She met with the two lawyers, signed an affidavit, and by her own account, never saw them again, never appeared in court, and in fact, never aborted her child.

However, the case her two lawyers filed went to the highest court in the land and in a landmark 7/2 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that “Jane Roe” and all women living in the United States had a constitutional right to end an unwanted pregnancy in the first trimester of pregnancy and in some cases, even through the second trimester of the pregnancy.

In the 44 years following that decision,

- 1.5 billion babies have been aborted worldwide
- 60 million of those babies were aborted in the USA
- More than a million abortions happen per year on average
- This year there were 67,106 as of Jan 23, 2017!

These statistics are staggering! Which is why this past Sunday many evangelical churches called worshippers to ***reflect deeply, pray fervently, and respond personally*** to what God has said regarding the ***sanctity of all human life***—especially the life of those yet unborn residing in their mother’s womb.

Most Christians embrace the Sanctity of Human life when we are talking about the life of a person after birth. But it is not so uniformly recognized when it comes to the sanctity of the life of a person who has not yet been born.

***Whose rights must be protected? The mother’s right to choose what to do about her pregnancy (Pro-choice) or the right of the unborn person to have life (Pro-life).***

- Americans are divided
- The Christian church is divided
- Evangelical Christians are divided

***And perhaps there are some of us here who are divided on this question.***

You yourself are “Pro-life” but you do not believe that God demands a ‘Pro-life’ position as the biblically mandated position for all believers.

So how do we talk about this question? Where do we go for definitive answers? And are we personally willing to let those answers shape our thinking and govern our practice when it comes to the issue of aborting the life of an unborn infant?

There are many ways to frame up a discussion on this topic, Given our context and our time frame, I want to approach this by thinking biblically about ***five basic questions that I believe demonstrate God’s will that all men recognize and protect the sanctity of all human life—especially the life of the unborn infant.*** And I want to frame these questions in a very personal way ***so that we examine this question on a personal and individual level...which is where we all live every day.***

**I. With regard to my own life:** *Does God give me the ultimate right to choose what to do with my body?*

In other words, who actually ultimately governs me and to what extent does this authority apply?

The Scriptures speak very clearly to this matter:

- A. We are not our own . . . we are bought with a price so we must use our bodies for His purposes and pleasure and not merely our own. (1 Cor 6:19-20)  
*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? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*
- B. We have been given freedoms and rights by God to use our bodies to pursue paths in life that fulfill us, for which God equipped and designed us, and that please and honor him. (Rom 12:1-2)  
*. . . present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service . . . that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*
- C. Because we were created in the image of God, our life is sacred to God and it must be held sacred by us.
- Created in His image as an image bearer (Gen 2:27)
  - Sacred to God above all other kinds of life (Gen 9:5-6)  
*Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you . . . And surely your blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of every beast will I require it. . .*  
You can eat animals but they can't eat you!

**II. With regard to the life of another:** *Does God give me **the individual** right to intentionally harm the life or well-being of another person?*

- **Direct Command** – Thou shalt not kill! (Ex 20:13; Dt 5:17; Mt. 19:18)
- **Extreme Penalty** – Capital Punishment (Gen 9:6)

*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man!*

- **NT Ethic** – Paul told the Thessalonians to *always seek to do good to one another and to everyone* (1 Thess 5:15)

So far we have reached two important conclusions from the Scripture:

1. I don't have the ultimate right over my own body.
2. I do not have the right to do harm to someone else's body. This brings us to the next question:

**III. With regard to the origin and beginning of life:** *When does a person become a person?*

- This is the key question, because, if what is growing in a woman's womb is a person, then I must not do harm to that person.
- All of us would agree...abortion in any form is the intentional termination of a pregnancy. What we really need to know is whether or not we are terminating a person.
- And we ultimately need more than human opinion on this. We need to know whether God sees what is growing in a woman's womb as an unborn person.
- So let's look at some key texts:
  - a. **Psalm 139:13** *For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*
  - b. **Psalm 22:9-11** *"Yet you are he who took me from the womb; you made me trust you at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God!" (ESV)*
  - c. **Jeremiah 1:5** *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee: and before thou camest fourth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations (also Isaiah 44:1-5)*
  - d. **Psalm 51:5** – David recounts his personal moral history: a sinner from conception.

- e. **Luke 1:40-44** – Elizabeth and Mary...John the Baptist leaping in her womb *for joy* at the sound of Mary's announcement that she was pregnant with Jesus. Elizabeth's baby felt joy in the womb!

**IV. With regard to Government:** *What responsibility does a government have to protect the life and well-being of its citizens?*

- A. ***Protect the lives of every person*** by demanding the life of those who wrongfully terminate the life of another. (Gen 9:6; Rom 13:1-5)
- B. ***Protect the life of the innocent and the righteous*** (Ex 23:7) *"Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked."*
- C. ***Value and protect the life of the unborn*** (Ex 21:22-25) A person who caused a woman to miscarry resulting in the harm or death of the infant would pay in kind – life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, etc.

**V. With regard to the Church and the Gospel:** *What does God want His people to do when the sanctity of human life has been violated by others?*

Millions of unborn people have been and are being murdered in our land. This should disturb and trouble us.

- A. ***We should grieve over this*** profoundly.
- B. ***We should pray for this*** persistently.
- C. ***We should voice our objection to this*** boldly.
- D. ***We should do our part to stop this*** legally.
- E. ***We should guard against this*** personally.

What if I am such a person who has had an abortion?

- Run to Jesus as fast as you can...crawl if you have to!
- Hang on to Jesus with all the strength you can!
- Believe Jesus when He said, "I forgive you."
- Rely on the grace of Jesus...every day, hour, and moment.

## **Conclusion:**

- The life of every image-bearer is precious to God and therefore it must be precious to us.
- We must learn to look at life from God's perspective and not our own. And, when we do, we discover that we are not our own. We do not belong to ourselves but to God and therefore, we must strive with all of our might to discern and do His will for our lives at every point in our journey, even when we find ourselves at a particular place because of a sinful choice or a tragic moment at the hand of another.
- Our bodies are not our own. They belong to Him. Therefore, we must use them to glorify Him, to advance His purposes, and for His glory, honor, and divine pleasure.
- Just as our bodies are not our own, neither are our children. They belong to God who has entrusted them to us that we might love and care for them and raise them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord to whom they belong.
- Often a person might conclude they are not the best person to raise the child they have conceived. Perhaps they are not ready or are financially ill-equipped to raise that child. Perhaps they conclude the world they are bringing this child into is so hostile it would be better for their baby not to be born. However, what is important to remember, is that every baby belongs to God. In a real sense, that baby has been entrusted to those who have conceived it...which is why a biblical marriage plays such an important role in raising the children God has entrusted to us.
- However, the decision about whether or not it is best to bring a baby into this world is not one that God has entrusted to us...that is His alone.
- And, at the end of the day, this is why the sanctity of human life matters. Not because it is politically correct or incorrect or whether it is socially accepted or despised. Sanctity of life matters because at the end of the day, life does not belong to us but to God. We are but stewards of our own life and the lives of those God has entrusted to us.