

Sanctity of Life Sunday

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Preacher: Chad Kleindienst

[0 : 00] What you're about to hear are the sounds of metal BB striking the side of the tin king.! For every BB that strikes, it represents 10,000 lives lost in the wars of America's past.

The American Revolution. The Civil War. World War I.

World War II. The Korean conflict. The conflict in Vietnam.

September 11th and the war on terror. Since 1973, the war will be under the shot.

The war will be under the shot. The war will be under the shot. The Holocaust. Thank you.

[1 : 32] God help us. If you would join me in prayer again.

Great Father in heaven. Lord, we come before you today. With heavy hearts, Lord. Knowing the travesty that surrounds us day by day, Lord.

And we see little change, God. Lord, we thank you, Lord. That you give us opportunity to become more aware of what takes place in this world that we live in, Lord.

Lord, we thank you, Lord, that by the shed blood of your son, Jesus, Lord, that we will one day be spared of the anguish and the pain of this earth, Lord.

Lord, we thank you, God, that we have you to lead us through this pilgrimage while we're here. And we thank you, God, that your gospel will prevail.

[2 : 55] Lord, I pray you meet with us this morning as we contemplate statistics and facts. But most importantly, Lord, that you meet with us in your word.

For we know that is where your power resides. We pray, God, that you open our hearts to hear what you have for us this morning. And that we would be forever changed by your word.

And compelled by your Holy Spirit, God. Thank you, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen. I don't think I'm alone in my emotion.

I just perhaps am not as good at suppressing it sometimes. And I can't promise that it won't well open me again as I speak this morning.

But as we heard the compelling sound of the BBs hitting the tin can and what that represents, there's more to add to that.

[4 : 07] These numbers that I'm about to mention are difficult for us to wrap our mind around. And they're rather large numbers. Some of you might be surprised when you hear this, and some of this may be very familiar to you.

But in 2020, according to statistics provided by the World Health Organization, worldwide, 42.7 million babies were killed in the womb.

That's approximately 125,000 per day. And the BBs that you just heard represent since 1973 to when that DVD was released.

And at that point, it was approximately 53 million in the United States. And at this point in our nation's history, that number is well over 67 million.

In the U.S., nearly one half of all pregnancies are unintended, and four in ten of those result in abortions.

[5 : 16] That's 22% of all pregnancies in the United States end in abortion. That's over 3,000 per day in the U.S. alone.

Here locally, Georgia keeps with the national average with approximately 100 a day, which is over 36,000 a year just in our state.

Those numbers may be shocking to you. I know that no one's going to find comfort in those numbers. But because of the circumstances that we find ourselves in as a nation and really around the world with the COVID, with this disease that's taken so many lives, I think it is fair to note on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, I think it's appropriate that I can tell you that so far since January 1st, there have been 200,000 COVID deaths worldwide.

There have been 2 million abortions by this point this year. And over the past 12 months, in about a year, there have been 2,032,835 COVID deaths as of this morning.

There have been 42.7 million abortions. So I just say these things to bring to our sight, to bring into view what we're up against.

[7 : 08] And as the songs that we were just listening to and the catechism that we were repeating, though we know that we serve a great God. we have knowledge of, saving knowledge of, a powerful gospel.

And the truth will prevail. So, please, as we go and we continue through this, although I want these statistics to ring clear in our minds to prepare us for what we're up against, I also want us to remember that our hope is in Jesus Christ.

And this is not a hopeless venture that we are encountering as we go forward.

So, I want to emphasize that God does care about the pre-born. We're told in Psalm 139, there's going to be several texts that I turn to.

I invite you to turn there as well if you can keep up. But for the sake of time, I'll be moving fairly quickly. But in Psalm 139, this is probably familiar to a lot of you.

[8 : 22] It says in verse 13 through 16, it says, 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.

Wonderful are your works, my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you. When I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed substance.

In your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. So, God cares about the pre-born, and He is sovereign over our lives from conception to death.

He numbers our days, and He determines when we will be born, how we will be born, and how long we will live. I also want to note that in Genesis, in the chapter 1 of Genesis, in verse 26, it says, And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

Every human that God creates is created in His image. These babies in the womb, and all of us here, are image bearers of God Himself, of the Creator of the universe, the Creator of all things.

[9 : 42] We are image bearers. And an abortion is a destruction of an image bearer of God.

And we also know that Jesus, the Christ, the promised one, came into the world through the womb. He was conceived in the womb of Mary.

Which begs the question, because it's a question that's often brought up about when is a human life, a viable human life. And I would argue that it's at conception.

As Christians, we think of the conception of Jesus Christ. At what point was He the Son of God? At what point was He incarnate?

At what point did He dwell among us? And I would argue that He dwelt among us as a fetus before He died for us on a cross. Emmanuel, God with us, came as a baby.

[10 : 50] He came as a fetus. He was born into this filthy place. And He dwelt among us. Another way that we recognize that God cares about the preborn and cares about children is He blesses the world with children.

All throughout Scripture, children are always a blessing. Never a curse. Children are never given to someone because God is angry with them.

It's because He wants to bless them. It's because He wants to bless them. Children are always a blessing. And in fact, throughout the Old Testament, children were being sacrificed to the God Magog and to Baal.

And God curses them for that. He also curses those that have knowledge of this and stand idly by. And Jesus says that it would be better to have a millstone tied around one's neck and be thrown to the bottom of the sea than to cause one of the children that believe to stumble.

[12 : 03] So yes, He cares about children, the born and the unborn. He cares about His image bearers. And He forbids murder across the board.

The taking of innocent human life is murder. The definition of murder is the pre-planned intentional killing of one person by another. The definition of abort is to terminate or end.

When we think of this in human terms, abort, abortion, it is the terminating and ending of a human life. which is strictly forbidden by the God we serve.

The creator of that very human life. So, therefore, I will stand before you today and I will stand for this ongoing is that abortion is murder.

And I would also make what I believe wholeheartedly is a biblical argument that it is murder regardless of circumstances. There is no biblical justification for murder regardless of circumstance, not rape, incest, disease, fetus that is deformed, not economics, population control, and least of all, inconvenience.

[13 : 30] But in saying that, I know that there is a biblical foundation for hope. And I know that it is very possible just statistically speaking, it is very possible that more than one person in this room has been involved in the practice of abortion.

Whether male or female, it is very possible. And I want whomever that might be in this room or anywhere else to know that Christ came for broken people.

and that everyone in this room, regardless of your background, you were broken. Those that are not sick do not need a physician and I can assure you we were all sick.

We were all sick in our sin and Jesus came to save sinners. And if you find yourself in that seat and if you feel like I stood here and just called you a murderer, let me tell you now that God died for murderers.

God died for the sake of our souls. He was born of a virgin, a virgin lived a sinless life. He died on the cross bearing the punishment for the sins of the world.

[14 : 54] For my sins. And then He arose victorious after being buried in the grave. He rose victorious over sin and ascended to heaven and at this moment is praying for us.

So there's great hope in that. So please understand I am not standing here to condemn those that have fallen into the sin of being involved in that way.

In fact, as we continue I want to let the church know how God says we are to respond. I think it's important that we recognize as we as a church as we look forward to how we may proceed as a church when we are fighting this battle is that we must recognize that this is a gospel issue.

Abortion is a gospel issue. It is a heart issue and this is not a war on people. This is a war on evil. I personally cannot think of something more evil than taking the life of the most defenseless of humanity.

But be aware this is this war against evil and not against people is a spiritual warfare and I had mentioned that our hope is in Christ Jesus and I want us to look at Ephesians 6.

[16 : 29] If you will turn there with me starting in verse 10. There are two parts that we should look at is that we need to identify our enemy and we need to be prepared to face him and neither of these things can we do on our own.

it requires the work of Christ to do this. I'll read starting in verse 10 finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers against the authorities against the cosmic powers over this present darkness against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm stand therefore having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness and as shoes for your feet having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace in all circumstances take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God praying at all times in the spirit with all prayer and supplication to that end keep alert with all perseverance making supplication for all the saints and also for me that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel for which

I am an ambassador in chains that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak I hope as you read along with me in that that you find encouragement in it that God does not send us alone and he doesn't send us unprepared that he is with us even to the ends of the earth to the ends of time he's commissioned us to go to all the earth sharing the gospel and that's what our goal should be when we are faced with a travesty such as abortion we remember all these numbers that I've spoken of in these statistics all of these things that are so overwhelming when we think of this issue that we are faced with that a tremendous amount of compassion is called for because people do not women and men alike do not enter into their teenage years and into college and then on with the idea that you know what

I think next year I'm going to have an abortion it's not something that they seek out it's not something they intend to do it's a matter of crisis it's a matter of a circumstance where in a lot of cases they see no other way out what they need to know is that there's hope there's hope in Christ Jesus and that hope is passed through his church to them we are called to be the voice for those that have no voice and I can assure you if you look for it there is plenty of opportunity to be that voice so when we read in Ephesians 6 10 through 20 that I just read then please hear me when I say that God is the only one that can do these things God can change the hearts of kings kings the way that he changes the course of a river he is the king of kings and just the very I was thinking when before I walked up here about what the word ruler means and it is the standard that all thing all else is going to be measured by so the ruler of a kingdom he is the measuring stick for all things that happen in his kingdom he is the one that determines what will and will not be lawful what will and will not take place in his kingdom what will and won't go unpunished a good king is just and a good king is righteous and I can tell you that not all earthly kings even aspire to that and none of them meet that criteria but there is the king of kings the standard which all kings are measured by and that is Jesus Christ and I can promise you he is just and he is righteous in his perfect character he passes down judgment so that is the king that we have hope in that is the king who is my king and your king and he's the ultimate king and he will have the last word in his kingdom

[21 : 48] I hope you find that as encouraging as I do and as I did as I was contemplating that earlier that we don't serve an earthly king we serve a king whose kingdom is not of this earth in Matthew 9 36 Jesus saw the crowds and he had compassion for them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd like all of us once were this is how we should look at those numbers because with every number that I mentioned earlier in those statistics there is a hurting woman a woman that found herself in crisis harassed by the evil one lost and helpless like a sheep without a shepherd secondly besides compassion and empathy is truth truth with love if you turn to first corinthians 13 i know these texts are familiar to you but they bear repeating and committing to memory and meditating on these things if you go to first corinthians 13 the first three verses paul says this if i speak in the tongues of men and of angels but have not love i'm a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal and if i have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if i have all faith so as to remove mountains but have not love i am nothing if i give away all i have and if i deliver up my body to be burned but have not love i gain nothing this is a call for us to bring truth by all means we want to bring our sword with us into battle we want to expose truth we want to expose what is made in darkness we want to expose sin with god's word we certainly do but we do so in love we do so with compassion and empathy my homework for everyone is that to read the rest of chapter 13 because god teaches us how to love through the apostle paul if you continue reading you will learn what love is and we should remember that the only offensive part of the armor of god the only thing we go on offense with is the sword which is his word the sword of the spirit is his word so if we are to offend in our battle against the evil that we're faced with if we were to offend with the gospel offend with the truth of the word and not with our own opinions and not with our own judgments!

But with the word that God has given us to fight with and something that we can certainly always do and this is a primary approach to all things that we are faced with but specifically with abortion we are to pray and to serve to make ourselves available to God and to be in his service to seek first his kingdom and then trust him that he will provide everything else we should pray that God will move and abolish abortion pray that he will send workers pray that he would turn the hearts of legislators and of leaders as I mentioned before he is more than capable and pray that he will bring the loss to repentance that is a primary mission that

God gives us as his people as his children is to go into the world sharing his gospel and to pray that the lost will come to repentance he grants repentance to those that believe and we have to remember as a church that we are called we are commanded to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves and I resist bringing a political tone to what I'm bringing forth this morning but I will say that speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves if there's anyone that cannot speak for themselves I would say it would be the unborn in the womb and we should speak up for them in the halls of congress on street corners in coffee shops and in front of abortion clinics our goal is to make

Christ known to preach him and him crucified to preach of his resurrection to preach of his ascension to preach of the hope that comes with these things and to preach that he promises to return and he always keeps his promises that our hope is in him and it does not end on this earth it ends with his return and him taking his children home to the place that he has gone forth and prepared for us this is what we have to share with the world this is what we have to share with those that are considering abortion those that condone abortion those that actually take scalpel in hand and do the things that they do!

Christ died for them too! And just remember that wherever we go and whatever we do and whatever we say that we do so with love and that we trust God with the results he's capable and we should never be so confident in ourselves but we should find our confidence in him we should never boast in ourselves but boast in him and rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ the work that none of us could have done because we don't find favor with him by the things that we do we find favor with God by the work that Christ has already done so!

[28 : 56] part a parting couple of notes is one there are numerous ways that you can get involved because I am certain that not everyone here feels called to stand in front of an abortion clinic holding a picketing or necessarily to try to convince people that are walking in that there's another way we're not all called to do that we're not all called to stand in a pulpit or preach we're not all called to be a vocal advocate that goes in before congress but we are all called to join the fight we are all called to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves some of us will only pray and I say only because that seems so small the reality is that that is the most integral and overarching part of what we're going to do is we're going to plead with

God the one who has the power to change things it's him that we should call on so if praying is the one thing that you can do then do that relentlessly faithfully calling on the Lord to bring change but also there are other!

opportunities you can go door to door if that's what God calls you to you certainly can go and stand in front of abortion clinics and speak for the speechless definitely and I can assure you that God has called me to do something I'm doing a small part of that now but I know that in the future he has more work for me and if anyone else wants to participate or has questions about how maybe they can be activated as it were then look me up find me and with permission of Nathan and the elders then I'd like to publish two phone numbers in next week's bulletin I meant to try to get that done this week but there's a second area that I don't want to leave out and that is abortion recovery we are involved my wife and I are involved in an abortion recovery ministry we just had one not long ago it's in the form of a retreat and I would just say it's 100% confidential

I'll say that before I say anything else about it but one of the phone numbers will be my wife's number Tish is her name her number will also be in the bulletin and you can call on her if you are someone that's been involved in an abortion before or had an abortion if you're a Christian woman that's had an abortion this ministry is for you because you may think that you have it whipped that you're okay I can assure you you are not the recovery you can be reconciled you can be forgiven and you can be restored and you can too can be activated in response to this these things that we reminder that you we are all broken in need of repair and Jesus is the one who mends so I would invite you to call that number as I said it's confidential and no one will have to know and you'll be invited to come and into that ministry so

I want to make sure I said that it's kind of a strange closing but nonetheless I invite anyone that wants to come alongside to speak with me anytime I'm not a great leader but I will do my best need