

God's Love for the Unborn

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Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] Psalm 139, beginning in verse 13.

For you formed me in 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 a secret place, 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.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? If you remember, back in July of 2015, the Center for Medical Progress began releasing a series of undercover videos in which they uncovered the horrendous truth that Planned Parenthood was engaged in the practice of selling the body parts of the babies that they had aborted.

In one such video, Deborah Nukatola, who is Senior Director of Medical Services for the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, explained how Planned Parenthood sells the parts of aborted children.

[1 : 43] And in the video, Nukatola describes how the heads of these unborn babies are the most valuable and go for the highest price.

In another video, Dr. Mary Gadder, the President of the Medical Director's Council for Planned Parenthood of America, negotiates the price for each aborted baby whom she refers to as specimens.

And in the video, she quips as she's negotiating for these prices that she would like to get a price that will result in her having a Lamborghini.

There are other videos, and they are all equally heartbreaking, heart-wrenching, and incredibly disturbing.

Not only are these unborn babies deprived of their lives, but they are also having their corpses desecrated for the profit of those who killed them.

[2 : 42] You'd think that these videos that expose aborted babies having their body parts pulled apart by tweezers, and that reveal people sipping on wine and dining on filet mignon as they negotiate the price that they will collect for selling the parts of these babies.

You'd think that that would be enough to awaken the conscience of America and demand that such an atrocious practice be put to immediate end.

However, during the release of these videos, America's media was focused on another story that they deemed to be a greater tragedy than the killing of unborn children and the selling of their body parts for profit, which, by the way, is against the law.

What story could be more horrific than this one? Well, if you remember, Walter Palmer, a dentist from Minnesota and an avid mid-game hunter, came under intense scrutiny for hunting and killing a lion in Zimbabwe.

The lion, who was named Cecil, was reported to have been one of Africa's most beloved and famous lions. He was the star attraction of the Huanj National Park.

[4 : 10] And overnight, Cecil the lion became more popular in death than he'd ever been in life. He gained about five million new friends on the internet who had never heard of him before.

Bound and determined, Cecil's new friends pledged that they would not stand idly by for this injustice that had occurred to their new BFF.

They felt that it was their duty to be his voice for the deceased lion. They would speak on his defense and on defense of all lion kind.

They would put an end to the predation of these fun-loving predators. Good Morning America co-anchor Laura Spencer referred to this tragedy as a very disturbing story.

She then turned things over to ABC correspondent David Wright for the full story on the lion-murdering American who ended poor Cecil's life, who, according to Wright, was pretty much the most hated man on the internet.

[5 : 25] And then at the end of the segment, Spencer lamented, saying, There are no words. CBS This Morning co-anchor Gail King referred to this story as something that, and I quote, The more you hear about it, the more upsetting it is.

And again, we are not talking about videos that depict the killing and mutilation and selling of dead babies, but a lion who was killed in Africa on a legal hunt.

But Sharon Osbourne, whose husband once bit the head off of a bat, called for the eradication of Palmer's home, his business, and his money.

British journalist Pierce Morgan made this proposal. He said, I will sell tickets for \$50,000 to anyone who wants to come with me and track down this fat, greedy, selfish, murderous businessman, like Dr. Palmer, in their natural habitat.

And then he added, Then we'd calmly walk over, skin him alive, cut off his head from his neck, and take a bunch of photos of us all grinning inanely at his quivering flesh.

[6 : 41] On the evening of July 28th, while many of these videos about the killing and dismembering and selling of babies and their body parts were circulating on the internet, late night talk show host Jimmy Kimmel, with tear-filled eyes, looked into the camera and said, I'm honestly curious to know why a human being would feel compelled to do that.

Again, speaking in reference to one dead lion, as opposed to the nearly 60 million children who have died, who have been aborted since 1973, when the Supreme Court made its decision on Roe versus Wade.

Now, I want you to understand me. I think lions are neat animals. When we go to the zoo, that's where I want to go. I want to see the lions.

And The Lion King is a great movie. But I know that the life of a lion pales in comparison to the life of a human being.

It's not even close. In fact, that same year, in June, a female lion attacked and killed a 29-year-old American woman on safari outside of Johannesburg, South Africa.

[8 : 12] But I bet, like me, you'd never heard of her before. In Tanzania, it is documented that between 1990 and 2005, 871 humans were killed or seriously injured by lions.

When a lion licks the blood off its paws after it's killed and eaten its prey, even if that prey, unfortunately, is a human being, I can tell you this, that there is no moral dilemma taking place in its mind over whether or not he did the right thing.

Because a lion is not a human being. There is something tragically wrong with America's moral compass when they are more outraged over the death of a lion than the death of millions of children.

Today is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. And today, many pastors across our nation are standing behind pulpits like this one, and they are declaring that abortion is wrong.

Declaring that abortion is an affront to God, who is the creator and the giver of life. Defenseless children are being killed, and they're being torn apart.

[9 : 35] While they may be unloved, while they may be unnamed by many in our nation, we know this. God loves them, and God knows their names.

They don't have a voice to speak with, but we do have a voice. And I believe that it's our God-given obligation. Not just today, but on all the days that we've been given to live, or up until Roe versus Wade is overturned, to declare that these children share in the humanity of our Lord, and this practice must be stopped.

Now, you won't find the word abortion in the Bible, but that does not mean that Scripture is silent at all on the issue.

As we've seen in Psalm 139, God declares through the psalmist that He is the creator, that He is the giver of life, and that human life is precious to Him.

Let's look again at verse 13. We see there very clearly that God is the giver of life. For you formed me in my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb.

[10 : 58] This truth is stated throughout Scripture, that God is the giver of life. Let's look at Genesis 1, 27 and 28. So God created man in His own image.

In the image of God, He created him. Male and female, He created them, and God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.

Through these words, we see that God has the power and that God has the authority to give life, to create life, and only He has that power and authority.

When Paul was witnessing to the Greeks in the Areopagus in Athens, he testifies to this truth in Acts chapter 17. He says, The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

And He made from one man every nation and mankind to live on all the face of the earth. What David is declaring in verse 13 is that the life that he has has been given to him by God.

[12:18] David didn't create himself, He didn't will himself into being, his life was given to him by God, as was your life, as is all life.

Not only does he say that God has given him life, but that God was intimately involved in the process. He says, You, you formed me, you knitted me together, you who created the heavens and the earth and everything within them, you know me intimately, so much so that you are the one who put me together in my mother's womb.

Not only does the Bible say that God is the giver of life, but it also says that He is the taker of it. In Job chapter 1, verse 21, Job confesses, Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I shall return.

The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The Bible says that murdering human beings is an affront to God's authority as the giver and taker of life.

Genesis 9, 6 says, Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. Now, I want you to hear me very closely on this one.

[13:51] Does that mean that since abortion doctors and mothers and different people have allowed this practice to go on, should we seek to put an end to their lives for what they have done and taken the lives of these children?

By no means. Absolutely not. In Romans 12, 19, Paul says that vengeance belongs to the Lord. Not to us. That's not our job. In Romans 13, 9, Paul cites four of the Ten Commandments that deal with human relations, that deal with the fact that we should not murder, and the overarching Old Testament command which was summed up in the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself.

Abortion, like murder and suicide, is an affront to God's sovereign authority as the giver and taker of life. Because they assert human beings as the ones who are in control of life and who are in control of death.

But God alone has that right. Why? Because God alone is the one who gives life. And since he's given it, it's only he who is allowed to take it.

[15:15] In verse 14, we see that human life is a wonderful work of God. David says, I praise you for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are the works and my soul knows it well. Back when I graduated from seminary and was ordained by our church in Kansas, I had a really a close friend of mine who was on our deacon board and he's passed away since.

But he was a great craftsman. And he was a sculptor. And he would make his thing that he loved to do was to make wooden ducks.

And they were so lifelike. They were so real. And I loved going over to his house, especially as a young pastor because I would often need encouragement from him and just ask him, you know, hey, what do you think about this?

And just I would go there and I would leave just full of encouragement from his support. And I treasure down in my office I have one of his models. It's a wood duck of a wood duck.

[16:19] And he gave that to me on the day of my ordination. And I treasure it because I marvel at the work of his hands.

Right? How could a block of wood you know this come out of something like that? And I marvel at the work of his hands. And here David is doing that with God.

Is he not? He's marveling at what God's hands are capable of doing. And human life is something to marvel at.

Conception is a miracle. It is a miraculous work of God. The growth and the development of a baby inside of its mother's womb is nothing short of amazing.

At three weeks from conception the baby's heart is formed and it starts to beat. Three weeks. At six weeks the diaphragm is formed and the heart and its four chambers are fully formed and the first brain waves are detected.

[17 : 27] At six weeks. At seven weeks the baby's hands feet arms legs and all its major organs are detectable. It's possible at this stage even for the baby to have the hiccups.

I remember much later on with our children when they were further on in development seeing Danny's stomach go up and down knowing that she was saying the baby is having hiccups. That was an amazing thing to me.

It's amazing what's happening inside of the womb of a mother as the baby is growing and developing. At eight weeks the major systems of the body are in place and the baby can recoil from a pinprick.

It can sense danger. It can feel pain. At nine weeks the baby sucks its thumb. Right? How cute is that? At ten weeks the baby has its own unique set of fingerprints unlike anybody else in all of the rest of the world.

At ten weeks the baby has its own fingerprints. At twelve weeks the baby has taste buds and it can smile. Twenty to thirty five percent of babies can survive outside of the womb at twenty three weeks old.

[18 : 42] That's amazing. Fifty to seventy percent of babies can survive outside of the womb between twenty four and twenty five weeks. More than ninety percent of babies can survive outside the womb between twenty six and twenty seven weeks.

I want to share with you a story from Gregory Kukul. He once wrote about a little girl named Rachel a daughter of a family friend of his. I want to read to you what he wrote.

He writes Rachel is two months old but she is still six weeks away from being a full term baby. She was born prematurely at twenty four weeks in the middle of her mother's second trimester.

On the day of her birth Rachel weighed one pound nine ounces but dropped to just a pound soon after. She was so small she could rest in the palm of her father's hand.

She was a tiny living human person. Heroic measures were taken to save the child's life. Why?

Because we have an obligation to protect nurture and care for other humans who would die without our help especially little children.

[20 : 00] Rachel was a vulnerable and valuable human being but get this he says if a doctor came into the hospital room and instead of caring for Rachel took the life of this little girl that very same Rachel who is being held in her mother's arms was inches away from her mother's womb where she could have been legally exterminated.

Today there are thousands of children whom God has given life. he's given life to them in whom he has intricately knitted together by the wonderful work of his hands.

Right now they are being put together by God but tomorrow they will be sucked out and ripped apart by the hands of human beings.

That's heartbreaking. abortion often occurs in America because children are seen as inconvenient.

In China it is advantageous to have a boy which subsequently leads to the abortion of many girls.

Likewise in India where the dowry price for a daughter is so extreme that mothers and fathers choose to abort their daughters in favor of having sons.

[21 : 26] we now have the ability to detect down syndrome and other disabilities in babies who are still in the womb and 92% of parents who receive a prenatal diagnosis of down syndrome choose to terminate their pregnancies and are encouraged by many to do so.

I remember when Jack and Hazel were born and we were going to before they were born and we were going to the appointments and I remember at a certain time they asked us do you want to have a genetics test done on your child to make sure there's nothing wrong with it and it wasn't even a question for Danny and I no we don't want to see that because this is a person this is our child that God has given to us and you know what even if it is flawed guess what we're all flawed and we will love that child no matter what I had a good friend of mine back in Kansas whose brother had down syndrome his name was Chris and he was one of the nicest people that I've ever met and incredibly talented I remember we had an event for our church where

Michael who's a great musician was going to play with his family and he said his brother was going to come play the drums his brother Chris and so I was like okay this is going to be really neat I wonder how Chris can do and let me tell you Chris rocked it he did I have seen few drummers as great as Chris was and so humble about it afterwards Chris that was amazing it's like yeah I like to play the drums it's like yes you do and you're great at it one of the nicest people that I've ever met in my life I loved being around Chris he always had a way of just cheering you up and encouraging you and it breaks my heart to think that in this world 90% of people like Chris aren't allowed to live alongside of us that's tragic and here's the other thing

I don't know what it's like to be the parent of children with disabilities like that but I'll tell you this I am so glad for them and I'm so glad for the decision that they made to allow their child to live and I'll tell you this that it's our job and it's our responsibility to encourage them to love them and to love their children and be thankful for the decision that they've made to choose life we should never give them a hard time for being so courageous and being so loving third thing we see is that God designed the womb to be a place of growth and safety for the unborn child in verse 15 David says my frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret intricately woven in the depths of the earth with use of things like sonograms we now have the ability to look inside of the womb and see the wonderful work that is taking place there it's amazing and over and over again in scripture God declares that the womb is a place where he works it is a place where the baby can grow and it's designed to be able to grow in safety tucked away inside of its mother let's look at a few verses Job 10 11-12 you clothed me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews you have granted me life and steadfast love your care has preserved my spirit Isaiah 49-5 and now the Lord says he who formed me from the womb to be his servant to bring Jacob back to him and that Israel might be gathered to him for I am honored in the eyes of the Lord and my God has become my strength Ecclesiastes 11-5 as you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with a child so you do not know the work of God who makes everything and then in Luke chapter 1 verses 39-44

[26 : 16] Elizabeth exclaims that the baby inside of her womb who is John the Baptist was leaping for joy inside of her when he was in the presence of Jesus Christ for the very first time and you know where Jesus was inside the womb of his mother right what if anything doesn't that resolve the issue for us as Christians about abortion that this plan of salvation that had been in existence from eternity past was brought into fruition with Jesus emptying himself of all of his divine prerogatives and taking on the flesh how did he do that being placed inside his mother's womb where he safely grew until the time was right for her to give birth this was God's plan the fourth thing we see is that God recognizes the unborn as a person from the moment of conception abortion in verse 16 your eyes saw my unformed substance and your book were written every one of them the days that were formed for me when as yet there was none of them Jeremiah 1 5 says similarly before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you were born I consecrated you I appointed you as a prophet to the nations the abortion debate is centered around this argument and it's this is the life inside the womb a person or not that's the argument if it isn't a person then I would ask what is it what is it what else could it be of course it's a person it couldn't be anything else those who are pro choice or pro abortion deny that the life is a person because if it is a person then they have to admit that that person has rights and it's not right to kill an innocent human being and their argument would then fall apart they are forced at that moment if that's the case to confess that abortion is taking innocent life and if that's the case then it's murder there's a lot of hypocrisy going around in our culture especially the culture that supports abortion one of the big things that people do now of days are gender reveals have you ever seen one of those where they make a big deal out of the fact that they're going to announce the baby's gender and they often will gather a lot of family together and they'll do some kind of surprise with blue balloons or pink confetti whatever the case is to announce the gender of their baby and these have become a big deal and I'm not knocking them but I'm saying it's crazy because when people do these types of gender reveals no one says to the couple and their unborn child hey congratulations your fetus is a boy or they don't say hey you know that glob of cells growing inside of you is female gendered they don't talk like that Hollywood is crazy about this stuff and their hypocrisy with it and their inconsistency right when Beyonce is pregnant it's a huge deal they treat that child as a human being and they almost worship it when Princess Kate of England had her children two children people went crazy about it they couldn't wait for these two people to be born and to know what they were going to be named and to

see pictures of them outside of the womb see the difference isn't whether or not they are people or not but whether or not they're wanted that's what it comes down to you want it then it's a person you don't want it then it's just a lump of flesh and we can easily remove that for you we've seen what the Bible says and how God answers this question any distinction made between the unborn and a person is artificial it's unbiblical and it's unchristian not only must we affirm what the Bible says on this issue but we also must not sit idly by while people are being mercilessly torn out of their mother's womb and robbed of their life we also must not sit idly by when it comes to ministering to the mothers who have had an abortion abortion is not the unpardonable sin it isn't and we as Christians have a duty to declare the gospel to all people and to let them know the hope that there is in Jesus Christ that God will love them no matter what they've done that God will forgive them no matter what they've done that God will heal them deeply and strip away the guilt and the shame and it's our job as his people to love on women on men who have allowed this to happen on families

Lord that we would declare to them the love of Jesus Christ and here's the thing God may lead such a one to our congregation a woman who was pressured who felt like that child was an inconvenience whatever the case might be and she had an abortion God may bring such a one to our congregation and if that's the case it's our job to love that woman not to drag her through the mud not to replay the thing that happened whenever it happened but to be gracious to her to be loving to her to disciple her and to let her know how much the Lord loves her and here's the other thing God might lead to this congregation a woman who is pregnant and unwed and who is contemplating having an abortion and if that's the case again we have the obligation and the duty as

[33 : 27] Christians to encourage her to have that child and when she has that child whether she gives it up for abortion or for adoption excuse me or she chooses to raise it we are there to support her in that decision with that life that she's courageously decided to birth I want to close with a personal story many years ago I was a youth pastor for maybe a year or two maybe just a year pretty inexperienced in ministry but the girls in our youth group had a close relationship with Danny my wife and I understood that because they're women and she can deal and relate a lot better to some of the issues that teenage girls have than I could and so a lot of times they would come to me and say hey I want to talk to Danny and that didn't bother me I was like you know what okay or they just go to Danny and Danny would be like hey I'm going to go in this room and I'm going to talk to such and such and I knew that that was good that they were being disciplined that there were things that they just maybe didn't feel comfortable talking to me about completely fine one instance after Sunday morning one of our teens grabbed Danny and took her into my office and the door was closed and it wasn't too much longer afterwards that Danny came out and she's like you're going to have to help me with this one and we went into my office and she this teen in tears who we knew well had a boyfriend she was pregnant and her boyfriend's mother was encouraging her to have an abortion and with tear filled eyes she looked at us and said what should

I do in that moment what will you do what would you say I told her we told her you're going to have this baby and we are going to be with you through every step of it we were there when she announced it to our youth group we were there sitting next to her in church when the baby was growing that church loved her was there for her and now today when I go on Facebook and I see pictures of her son who's now six I'm joyed I fell with joy because he's living but it breaks my heart to know that somewhere out there somebody wanted him to be dead because he was an inconvenience at the time may it never be and may we do all that we can not just today but all the days that we've been given to be a voice for the voiceless and to share the love of Jesus Christ that people would know the mercy that God will have on them and the joy that comes from children who are allowed to live