

Sanctity of Life - January 22, 2012

January 22 marks the anniversary of the famous (or perhaps infamous) U.S. Court ruling known as *Roe v. Wade*. As this decision summarily legalized abortion in our land, it is important to say a word or two about life.

As a church, The Chapel is committed to the beauty and honor of human life. It is why we work among the Dalit of India; we dig clean water wells in Mozambique; we stand against human trafficking and build schools for the children of temple prostitutes; we feed the poor and homeless and support local ministries that provide proper alternatives to abortion.

We are committed to human life because we believe all people are valuable and created in the image of God. The Bible depicts God as the Creator—the one who has fashioned human beings in his own image. The psalmist describes God’s high and sacred value of all human life, which may be seen even in his particular care and watchful sovereignty over people who are not yet born (Psalm 139).

The recurring theme of the Old Testament is that God places the highest value on human life for it reflects his image and bears his likeness. His care and providential knowledge and love of all begin long before our actual birth and extend throughout eternity.

The New Testament strongly affirms that truth and builds upon it. A common emphasis of the Lord Jesus Christ is that the “least” of those in a society (the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the imprisoned—those which the world deems unimportant, “throwaway” people), are to be cared for compassionately (Matthew 25:31–46). Certainly the unborn qualify for Jesus’ “least of these.” Silent, defenseless, without representation, their life matters to God and is affirmed by his Son. To obey Christ’s command to care for “the least” in our world, we must and do support the protection of unborn babies.

As we seek to protect the lives of the unborn, we must also be prepared to love and care for those who have had an abortion and are suffering from the pain of overwhelming guilt and depression or even contemplating suicide. Tangible compassion is essential for both the unborn baby and the mother.

All people have been created in God’s image. On this unfortunate anniversary, we state without stuttering that we are pro-life. Yet, let us not only be pro-life with regard to the unborn—but let us seek to be pro-humanity, desiring to see that the caring principles of Scripture be applied to *all* the issues of human rights: from human trafficking and slavery, from racism and discrimination, and from all the manifold tragic effects of sin in this fallen world.

Finally, may we be “pro-NEW life,” seeking to help communicate the offer of spiritual life in Christ through faith in his cross, for that is our highest calling. For it is in Christ where human dignity and worth are truly found.

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