

Dignity of
HUMAN LIFE

Valuing God's gift of humanity
at every step of life's journey

BONUS
**AGE-SPECIFIC
LESSONS
FOR KIDS**

**SERMON
NUGGETS**
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Dignity of HUMAN LIFE

resource guide



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BONUS

Bonus
VALUING LIFE FROM THE START..... 25

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Previously titled "Pulse Check."

Imago Dei

The beliefs of Dr. Peter Singer, an ethics professor at Princeton University, are anathema to those of us who believe in the sanctity of human life. Yet, unlike some in the abortion movement, Dr. Singer is, though offensive in speech and philosophy, honest and straightforward about what he believes and why he believes it.

When articulating his support for legalized abortion, Peter Singer admits his valuation of human life is based on a person's capacities instead of it being measured on the Christian belief that life is made in God's image, and thus worthy of protection. In other words, if a person has little or no capacity to think, walk, speak or write, his or her life, according to Dr. Singer, is inferior, and thus dispensable.

He realizes his perspective is radical, but still believes it's right. In talking about his campaign to change people's minds on this topic, he said, "We are trying to overturn 2,000 years of Christian tradition."

Interestingly enough, the mainstream pro-abortion movement is very uncomfortable with Dr. Singer's blunt line of reasoning. But as Dr. Tim Keller, senior pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, has said, Dr. Singer's reasoning presents a logical crisis for those who support abortion rights:

If you don't believe in the image of God, what are you going to ground human rights in? You're going to ground it in capacities. If you can't protect the unborn, you can't protect the newly born, you can't protect the mentally handicapped, you can't protect old people. It's a fact. It's logical.

If you go back to the beginning of the Christian church, here's what you saw: they came into a Greco-Roman world that also grounded the idea of rights on capacities. Aristotle said that some races are too emotional, they couldn't reason because they didn't have the capacity for higher reason. They deserved to be slaves. And in the

Greco-Roman world, you had slavery, you had terrible poverty, you had lots of abortion, you had infanticide. It was perfectly legal ... girl babies died of exposure. And you took the elderly, sick and poor people and just let them die. And that was all legal; and it was done all the time.

But the Christians came along and they believed in the Imago Dei. And because they believed in the image of God, from the beginning they were champions of life. They were totally against abortion, but they were also against infanticide. They were not one-issue people. They were champions of women, they were champions of orphans, they were champions of the weak, they were champions of the poor.

Because when you believe in the image of God, the circle of protected life expands. But if you don't believe in the image of God, if you only believe in capacities or some other trumped-up approach to why we believe in human rights, the circle will continually contract. It will get smaller and smaller, and fewer and fewer people will be protected.

I'm grateful for Tim's wise perspective. As Christians, we must speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. There is a glorious history in the church of believers running in to help the vulnerable and those without capacity—just as everyone else is running out. Jesus' 2,000-year-old command to care for "the least of these" remains as relevant as ever today.

Our hope is that the information in this Dignity of Human Life guide will equip you to be a voice for life at every stage and condition.



President
Focus On The Family



1 Scriptures: Dignity of Human Life

The Bible is far from silent on the topics of life and justice. This resource provides just a few of the Scripture verses that speak to the value of life created in God's image from the moment of fertilization until its final breath.

Remember this: the Lord Jesus Christ began his incarnation as an embryo—growing into a fetus, infant, child, teenager and adult.

God is the Creator of Life

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

Job 33:4 “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life.”

Psalms 119:73 “Your hands made me and fashioned me.”

Psalms 139:13-16 “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.”

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.”

Matthew 1:20 “But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’”

Psalms 100:3 “Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.”

Isaiah 44:24 “Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: ‘I am the Lord, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by myself.’”

Isaiah 64:8 “But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.”

Psalms 127:3-5 “Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!”

Scripture Addresses the Child in the Womb as a Unique Individual

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in your mother's body I chose you. Before you were born I set you apart to serve me. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations.”²

Luke 1:15 “He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.”

Luke 1:41, 44 “When Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. [And she exclaimed], ‘when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.’”

Isaiah 49:1, 5 “The Lord called me from the womb ... formed me from the womb to be his servant.”



Development of the hands at 7 weeks fertilization

Galatians 1:15 “But God set me apart from the time I was born. He showed me his grace by appointing me.”²

Ephesians 1:3-4 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.”



Should a Child Who Might Be Born with a Disability Be Aborted?

Isaiah 45:9-11 “How terrible it will be for anyone who argues

with his Maker! He is like a broken piece of pottery lying on the ground. Does clay say to a potter, ‘What are you making?’ Does a pot say, ‘You don’t have any skill’? How terrible it will be for anyone who says to his father, ‘Why did you give me life?’ How terrible for anyone who says to his mother, ‘Why have you brought me into the world?’ The Lord is the Holy One of Israel. He made them. He says to them, ‘Are you asking me about what will happen to my children? Are you telling me what I should do with what my hands have made?’”²

Exodus 4:11 “The Lord said to him, ‘Who makes a man able to talk? Who makes him unable to hear or speak? Who makes him able to see? Who makes him blind? It is I, the Lord.’”²

1 Corinthians 1:27 “But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.”

Remember this: God forbids the taking of innocent human life.

Should a Child Conceived as a Result of Rape or Incest Be Aborted?

Deuteronomy 24:16 “Fathers shall not be put to death because of their children, nor shall children be put to death because of their fathers. Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.”

God Forbids the Taking of Innocent Human Life

Genesis 9:6 “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.”

Exodus 20:13 “You shall not murder.”

Exodus 23:7 “Do not kill the innocent and righteous.”

Amos 1:13-14 “The people of Ammon have sinned again and again. So I will punish them. They ripped open the pregnant women in Gilead.”²

Exodus 21:22-25 “If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman’s husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide. But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.”³



Does God Forgive Those Who Have Had Abortions?

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.”

Ephesians 1:7 “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.”

John 3:16-17 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”



We Are to Defend and Protect Life

Proverbs 31:8 “Speak up for those who can’t speak for themselves. Speak up for the rights of all those who are poor.”²

Proverbs 24:11-12 “Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, ‘Behold, we did not know this,’ does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?”

James 1:27 “Pure and undefined religion before our God and Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”⁴

Isaiah 1:17 “Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow’s cause.”

Hosea 14:3 “In you the orphan finds mercy.”

Deuteronomy 27:19 “Cursed is he who distorts the justice due an alien, orphan, and widow.”³

Psalms 41:1 “Blessed is the one who considers the poor! In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him.”

Psalms 68:6 “God makes a home for the lonely; He leads out the prisoners into prosperity.”³

Psalms 10:12-15 “Lord, rise up! God, show your power! Don’t forget those who are helpless. Why do sinful people attack you with their words? Why do they say to themselves, ‘He won’t hold us accountable’? God, you see trouble and sadness. You take note of it. You do something about it. So those who are attacked place themselves in your care. You help children whose fathers have died. Take away the power of bad and sinful people. Hold them accountable for the evil things they do. Uncover all the evil they have done.”²

Isaiah 58:6-10 “Set free those who are held by chains without any reason. Untie the ropes that hold people as slaves. Set free those who are crushed. Break every evil chain. Share your food with hungry people. Provide homeless people with a place to stay. Give

naked people clothes to wear. Provide for the needs of your own family. Then the light of my blessing will shine on you like the rising sun. I will heal you quickly. I will march out ahead of you. And my glory will follow behind you and guard you. That is because I always do what is right. You will call out to me for help. And I will answer you. You will cry out. And I will say, ‘Here I am.’ Get rid of the chains you use to hold others down. Stop pointing your finger at others as if they had done something wrong. Stop saying harmful things about them. Work hard to feed hungry people. Satisfy the needs of those who are crushed. Then my blessing will light up your darkness. And the night of your suffering will become as bright as the noonday sun.”²

Matthew 25:34-40 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’”

Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Deuteronomy 30:19 “I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live.” ■

2 Research Notes



Based on accumulative data from the two primary sources of U.S. abortion statistics (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*⁵ and *Guttmacher Institute*⁶), more than 1 million abortions are performed each year in the United States. Since 1973, we estimate more than 52 million abortions have been performed in the United States.

Who Has Abortions?

- Based on current abortion rates, about one in three women will have an abortion by age 45.⁶
- 44 percent of women who had abortions in the U.S. had at least one previous abortion.⁷
- Almost half (49%) of abortions are among women and teens 24 years old and younger.⁸
- Women aged 20-24 obtain 32% of all abortions, and teenagers obtain 16%.⁹
- 84 percent of women who had abortions in the U.S. were unmarried.¹⁰
- Nearly 60% of abortions are among women who have had one or more children.¹¹

Abortion in the Church

The church has a responsibility to speak out on the sanctity of human life and to offer healing and forgiveness to women who have had abortions. Post-abortive women and men (as well as women and families at risk for abortion) are sitting in services every Sunday.

- Nearly two-thirds of women having abortions say they are Christians.¹²

Abortion and Women of Color

Historically, the abortion industry intentionally markets abortion as a solution to women of color, locating

their clinics in ethnic neighborhoods.

- About 13 percent of American women are black, yet they account for over 35 percent of all abortions.¹³
- Less than 1 in 6 Caucasian pregnancies end in abortion.¹⁴
- Almost 1 in 2 African-American pregnancies end in abortion.¹⁵
- Hispanic women account for 25% of abortions.¹⁶
- The abortion rate among African-American women is three times higher than among white women.¹⁷

Reasons for Abortion

Although many think that abortions are done mainly for the “hard cases” of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother, statistics gathered by abortion providers themselves tell a different story:¹⁸

- Nearly 75% say a baby would interfere with work, school or other responsibilities.
- Nearly 75% say they cannot afford to have a child.
- Nearly 50% say they do not want to be a single parent or they are having problems with their husband/partner.

Remember this: Since 1973, we estimate more than 52 million abortions have been performed in the United States.

Polls Reflect Some Encouraging Trends, but also Confusion about the Abortion Issue

In May 2012, according to a Gallup poll, 50% of Americans identify themselves as “pro-life,” compared to a record-low 41% who say they are “pro-choice.” The poll also revealed a clear moral divide on abortion with 51 percent of Americans finding abortion “morally wrong,” compared to 38 percent who say it is “morally acceptable.”

However, a recent Barna study of 1,001 adults explored Americans' views on abortion, asking if they believe "abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases."¹⁹ Given these four options, the nation's population leans toward retaining legal status for abortion:

- 49% prefer keeping it legal in all or most cases.
- 42% would like to make it illegal in all or most instances.

Among evangelical Christians:

- 78% believe that the practice should be illegal in all or most cases.

David Kinnaman, president of the Barna Group and the director of the study, said:

"As Americans appear ready to rethink many different issues, it is important to consider new ways of communicating about and addressing the issues of abortion, life and choice.

Within that context, it is worth recognizing that a slight plurality of most population groups has settled into the idea that abortion should be kept legal, but that it should be only available selectively.

Yet, one of the intriguing countertrends to public support for legalized abortion is the fact that younger born again Christians, specifically 18- to 25-year olds, in general seem to be embracing, or at least retaining, a conservative viewpoint on abortion."

Quick Facts on Adoption²⁰

Globally: There are more than 150 million orphans around the world.

In the USA: On any given day, more than 450,000 children are in the U.S. foster care system.

More than 100,000 children in the U.S. are waiting to be adopted—just waiting for the right family to find them.

The average length of stay in foster care is nearly 22 months, and a child in foster care can wait five years or more to be adopted.

Adoption from foster care is virtually free

The average age of the child waiting to be adopted from foster care is eight years old. Many are older,

in sibling groups, are minority children and/or have special needs.

Each year, 20% of children exit foster care at age 18 without an adoptive family.

The U.S. also has more than 300,000 churches, and God has given clear commands for Christians to take care of His orphan children.

So if the command is clear and the need is apparent, why are these kids still waiting?



Globally: There are more than 150 million orphans around the world.

The scope of this problem is too big for any one person or organization to solve, but we can join forces to make a difference.

There are many different ways to minister to orphaned children and to the adoptive families that have welcomed these children home. Not everyone is called to adopt, but helping support adoptive families is nearly as important as welcoming a child into your home.

The good news is that help is as easy as cooking, cleaning, childcare and prayer. Learn more about how your church can wrap around adoptive families at iCareAboutOrphans.org.

Quick Facts on Down Syndrome²¹

- As the most common genetic condition, there are over 400,000 people in the U.S. with Down syndrome (DS). One out of every 691 babies is born with DS.
- Only 1% is hereditary. The other 99% is still a mystery to science. No toxin, food, environment or exposure has been found as the cause.
- While the only known factor is that it increases with age, the truth is that actually over 80% of babies with DS are born to women under 35.

- Research indicates that between 50% and 93% of babies in the U.S. that are prenatally diagnosed with Down syndrome are aborted.²²

Quick Facts on Human Trafficking²³

More children, women and men are held in slavery right now than over the course of the entire trans-Atlantic slave trade. Millions toil in bondage, their work and even their bodies the property of an owner.

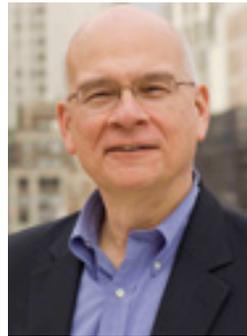
- After drug dealing, human trafficking (both sex trafficking and trafficking for forced labor) is tied with the illegal arms industry as the second largest criminal industry in the world today, and it is the fastest growing.
- Worldwide, there are nearly two million children in the commercial sex trade.
- There are an estimated 600,000 to 800,000 children, women and men trafficked across international borders annually.
- Approximately 80 percent of human trafficking victims are women and girls, and up to 50 percent are minors.
- The total market value of illicit human trafficking is estimated to be in excess of \$32 billion.
- Sex trafficking is an engine of the global AIDS epidemic.

To mobilize your church to follow God's call to justice, visit International Justice Mission: ijm.org

Quick Facts on the Elderly²⁴

- Research of 16,000 care facilities shows that approximately 85 percent of the residents of skilled-care centers never have visitors, not from family, friends, clergy or anyone from a church.
- Only about five percent of those same facilities had chaplains.
- Per capita, those over age 65 have the largest suicide rate of any other age group in America. ■

3 Sermon Nuggets



Tim Keller on the Image of God

What happens in a society that got its idea of human rights from a belief in the image of God, that all people are created in the image of God? What happens to that society when as a whole it loses the idea of God? You

see, what happens when you have a secular society in which most of the cultural elite say, "Well, we don't believe in God anymore, and therefore we don't believe human beings were made in the image of God, we just evolved, they are very complex organisms?"

Now, how do you ground human rights in the worth of the individual human being? what does that worth consist of? what makes a human being worthy of rights now that you don't believe in the image of God anymore?

The reason a human being deserves rights, protections, is because they have the capacity, they have the capacity to reason, they have self-consciousness, they have the capacity to make moral choices, they know right from wrong, they have the capacity for what some professors call "preferences." And because they have reason and the ability to make choices and they have preferences, they are moral agents and therefore they are capable, or they are worthy of protection; they have rights.

You see how incredible, crucial, important, the *image of God* teaching is?

But the Christians came along and they believed in the Imago Dei. And because they believed in the image of God, from the beginning they were champions ... well, first of all, they were totally against abortion, from the beginning. Because if you believe

in the Image of God, you have to be. If human life is good, then nascent human life has got to be good.

But they were also against infanticide. They were not one issue people. They cared for the poor. They cared for women, they didn't make widows ... at that time most people said that if you are a widow, you've got to remarry. They were champions of women, they were champions of orphans, they were champions of the weak, they were champions of the poor. And they were against abortion. And they put the rest of the culture to shame because of their belief in the sanctity of life.

So that eventually, the whole Western world adopted the idea of the image of God. Because when you believe in the image of God, the circle of protected life expands. But if you don't believe in the image of God, if you only believe in capacities or some other trumped-up approach to why we believe in human rights, the circle will continually contract. It will get smaller and smaller, and fewer and fewer people will be protected. You see how incredible, crucial, important, the image of God teaching is?

What if we took the image of God seriously? First of all, regardless of what the law of the land says, we would know abortion, except to save the life of a mother, is a violation of the image of God. Secondly, the women who have had abortions, and the men who have helped them have abortions, would not feel like scum, because James 3:9 says you don't disdain, you don't demonize, you don't curse, you offer grace to everybody. You see, if we believed in the image of God and say abortion is wrong, we wouldn't make women who have had abortions feel terrible, like scum or something. And we wouldn't be single issue people, we would be for all of the poor and all of the weak and all of the marginal. And we would be a very unusual community, wouldn't we? Now let's be that.²⁵

Tim Keller is the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, New York.



David Platt: A Compassionate Call to Counter Culture

In this day when social issues are creating clear dividing lines in society, moral or political neutrality is no longer an option for those who

believe the gospel. It's simply not enough to focus on only those issues that are most comfortable—and least costly—to us.

But what if the main issue is not poverty or homosexuality or abortion? What if the main issue is God? What if the same God who moves us to war against sex trafficking also moves us to war against sexual immorality? What if the same gospel that compels us to combat poverty also compels us to defend traditional marriage?

What if all of these cultural hot-button issues are all connected to our understanding of who God is and how he relates to everything around us?

Consider the way the Bible describes the relationship between God and an unborn baby.

The psalmist writes to God:

“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” **(Psalm 139:13-16).**

As we read these words, we're reminded of the core gospel truth that God is the Creator. He alone has the power and authority to give life. Elsewhere in the Bible, Job says, “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life” **(Job 33:4).** He also says, “In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind” **(Job 12:10).**

God is not only the giver of life; he is also the taker of life. Again, Job confesses, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away” **(Job 1:21).** God himself declares, “I bring death and I give life” **(Deuteronomy 32:39)**.⁴ This is why murder and suicide are both sins. It is God's prerogative alone, as Creator, to give and take innocent life.

In light of these biblical realities, it becomes abundantly clear that abortion is an affront to God's sole and sovereign authority as the giver and taker of life. Abortion, like murder or suicide, asserts human beings as the ones who control life and death. But God the Creator alone has the right

to determine when someone lives and dies, and abortion flies directly in the face of his authority.²⁶

Dr. David Platt is the pastor of The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Alabama.

Coming February 2015: Counter Culture by David Platt
CounterCultureBook.com



Glenn Packiam: Why Should We Care About the Dignity of Human Life?

Let's begin in the beginning. God created the heavens and the earth, on purpose and with pleasure. He called it good. And then He made the Human.

Why did He make the Human? Silence for a moment the familiar chorus that "God made us to be in relationship with Him." True. But, Genesis doesn't say that. What it does say is that God made the Human to be His image bearers and to reign. From a place of loving communion with God, the Human was to bear His image and reflect His wise order and loving rule into the world.

When we grasp this broad framework of God's first creation and the first humans' role in it, we begin to see what new creation and new humanity are about. In Christ, new creation has begun; in Christ, we become a new humanity, regardless of race, gender or social status. For the Christian, then, our identity and our vocation have been restored. We are not what we used to be—subhumans, rebelling against God and degrading other humans. Instead, we have become a sign in the world of what God is like. We bear His image and reflect His rule.

To be clear, this doesn't mean imposing some kind of theocracy upon unwilling people. Rather, it means showing the world a different reality. You see, in the world where Jesus is King, life—from the womb to the tomb—is holy. The hungry are fed, the poor are cared for, the vulnerable are protected, the stranger is welcomed, the weak are lifted up, the proud are brought low, and the oppressed go free!

When a Christian speaks and works for the dignity of human life, he is not engaging in a public

relations campaign, but he is reclaiming an Image; she is not imposing her cultural values on others, but she is recovering a vocation to bring blessing to all peoples. For the Christian, life and justice and mercy are not fashionable ideas that can fuel a clever campaign and give church folks a nice feeling of fulfillment. Carrying hope to the hopeless, being a blessing to all peoples, is our original design, a design now restored to us in Christ.

Why do we care about the dignity of human life? Because God's new creation has begun in us. The work that God will do to remake earth and heaven has begun now in the renovation of our hearts by the Holy Spirit. And that renewing work in us spills out into our work to set things right in our world. Every time we welcome the stranger and open our hearts and homes to orphans, every time we meet the needs of a vulnerable pregnant woman, every time we release people from oppression or help the poor, every time we visit an elderly shut-in and give a cup of cold water in Jesus' name, we are announcing the Kingdom of God. We are living now as it will be then. We are bearing the image of a loving Creator and reflecting His rule in our world.

We are participating in God's arriving Kingdom and His will being done on earth as it is in heaven. And this is what we were made to do.²⁷

Glenn Packiam is the lead pastor of New Life Downtown in Colorado Springs, Colorado.



Shane Idleman: My Child Would Have Been 22 This Year

This is extremely difficult for me to write—I shed many tears, contemplated deleting it, and prayed diligently for direction. Approximately 22 years ago, as a prodigal, I conceded to my

girlfriend's request to abort our child around the 5th week. The pain of that decision still haunts me today.

What would my child look like? Was it a boy or a girl? I can picture walking and talking with my child ... watching his or her first steps ... holding them when they cry and rejoicing with them when they succeed. But these are just dreams in my mind; dreams that often leave me heartbroken.

Regret is one of the hardest pains because it is a constant reminder that we failed ... failed God, others and ourselves. As a pastor who regrets an abortion in my past, I want to say that there is hope for those who have participated in, or who have had, an abortion.

If this is you, I encourage you to read Psalm 51. Both personal experience and the Bible have taught me that God's unfailing love and compassion will see you through. Allow His forgiveness to set you free through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. We lean on His strength for the future and not on our failures of the past.

And now, a word for my fellow pastors: we can no longer remain silent while silent screams go unheard. We are to be pillars who support truth. Today, the truth is often neglected, watered-down or avoided altogether in the hope of not offending members and building a large audience.

Abortion is rarely mentioned so repentance is never sought. We want to build a church rather than break a heart; be politically correct rather than biblically correct; coddle and comfort rather than stir and convict.

Deep repentance must take place at the national level. When human life is devalued, atrocities such as the holocaust, slavery, sex trafficking and abortion occur. God help us when we destroy what He has created. I cannot, and will not, remain silent. Will you?²⁸

Shane Idleman is the founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, California.

Scott Klusendorf: The SLED Test

Philosophically, there is no morally significant difference between the embryo you once were and the adult you are today. The simple acronym SLED can be used to illustrate these non-essential differences:

Size: True, embryos are smaller than newborns and adults, but why is that relevant? Do we really want to say that large people are more valuable than small ones? Size doesn't equal value.

Level of Development: True, embryos and fetuses are less developed than you and I. But again, why is this relevant? Should older children have more rights

than their younger siblings? Some people say that the immediate capacity for self-awareness and a desire to go on living makes one valuable. But if that is true, newborns do not qualify as valuable human beings.

Environment: Where you are has no bearing on who you are. Does your value change when you cross the street or roll over in bed? If not, how can a journey of eight inches down the birth canal suddenly change the essential nature of the unborn from nonhuman to human? If the unborn are not already valuable human beings, merely changing their location can't make them so.

Degree of Dependency: If viability bestows human value, then all those who depend on insulin or kidney medication are not valuable and we may kill them. Conjoined twins who share blood type and bodily systems also have no right to life.

In short, although humans differ immensely with respect to talents, accomplishments and degrees of development, they are nonetheless equal (and valuable) because they all have the same human nature.²⁹

Scott Klusendorf is the founder and president of Life Training Institute in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

John Piper on Ways to Be Actively Involved in the Solution:

- Consider adoption.
- Be a regular giver of your money to Crisis Pregnancy Centers.
- Volunteer in a Crisis Pregnancy Center.
- Be involved in spreading truth with good literature.
- Make your presence known at the abortion clinics in town by writing, phoning or visiting and talking, if you can, with those who work there.
- Dream a new kind of ministry.
- Pray!³⁰

John Piper is the founder of DesiringGod.org. ■

A Prayer for THE DIGNITY OF HUMAN LIFE

Lord God, Creator of all things, we marvel that in Your providence and plan You created mankind in Your own image.

Would You open our eyes to see people as You do? Help us to see their needs and have mercy on them, knowing that from the formation of a child's first tiny cell to life's final breath, all life has dignity and value simply because we each bear Your image.

Lord, we thank You for Your Word that gives us the answers to questions that span all of time and every culture. Questions like, "Who is God? Who am I? Who is my neighbor?"

Father, our hearts are touched and, yes—convicted—when we read about how our Lord Jesus responded to those same questions with the story of the Good Samaritan. He saw another man who was broken and bleeding, and instead of looking the other way, as others had, stopped and cared for that man even at great cost to himself. Give us courage to respond to Jesus' call to, "Go and do likewise."

Lord, help us not to be silent in the face of injustice, but be a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Let us shine a light on practices that distort human dignity, like human trafficking and the cycle of poverty that limits God-given potential and dreams.

Open our hearts to willingly make sacrifices to meet the needs of those dying preventable deaths because they lack food, medicine and clean water.

Open our arms to embrace those with special needs as a special reflection of Your very image.

Show us how we can reach out to orphans in distant lands and to the foster child in our own backyards who is waiting, hoping and praying for a family to call their own.

Help us not to pass judgment on the woman facing an unexpected pregnancy, but instead to surround her with support—helping her to see the child growing within her as a unique person with a life as valuable as her own.

Show us how to walk alongside the one who regrets a past abortion, pointing them toward healing and forgiveness. Strip us of our pride and speak gentle words through us as we remember that each of us is a sinner desperately in need of Your grace.

Remind us to care for the widow in distress and loneliness and to befriend those in prison.

Cause us to rejoice as we see Your image expressed through various skin colors and ethnic traditions, as we refuse to tolerate racist attitudes that mock the One who created us.

Give us eyes to see those who disagree with us as You see them, treating them with respect and dignity while helping them to open their eyes to see the beauty and value of life.

In the name of Jesus, the source of our dignity and strength, amen!



**Adapted from the "Dignity of Human Life" video from Focus on the Family*

4 Personal Perspectives

After Abortion: a Woman's Perspective

Michaelene Fredenburg

When I became pregnant at 18, I choose to have an abortion. I thought the abortion would erase the pregnancy. I thought I could move on with my life. I was wrong. Although I didn't feel this way before the procedure, it was now clear to me that the abortion ended the life of my child. I felt guilt and desired punishment.

I soon found myself in a cycle of self-destructive behavior that included an eating disorder. This downward spiral continued until suicidal thoughts began to scare me. That's when I finally attended an after abortion healing retreat offered by a local pregnancy center.

Realizing that I wasn't the only one having difficulty after an abortion helped tremendously. With the help of counselors and supportive friends, my time of self-condemnation and self-punishment slowly came to an end. This allowed me not only to grieve the loss of my child, but also to identify and work on my unhealthy behaviors.

It took me several more years to finish my journey to wholeness, but things progressively improved, as I learned to act on the truth of God's mercy and redemptive grace.

Michaelene created AbortionChangesYou.com, a website that is a safe haven for anyone whose life has been touched by abortion.

A Former Abortionist's Perspective

Dr. Bernard Nathanson

Dr. Bernard Nathanson (1926-2011) wrote, "I am personally responsible for over 75 thousand abortions." He was one of the main architects of the strategic plan to dehumanize the unborn child and legitimize abortion across the country. He succeeded beyond all his own expectations.

Then something happened that forced him to see abortion for what it is and to renounce all that he had done and advocated. Ultrasound technology arrived in his office in the mid-seventies. Ultrasound

technology provided a true "window to the womb" and revealed the humanity of the unborn child.

Nathanson wrote:

"From then on we could see this person in the womb from the very beginning—and study and measure it and weigh it and take care of it and treat it and diagnose it and do all kinds of things. It became, in essence, a second patient. Now a patient is a person. So basically I was dealing then with two people, instead of just one carrying some lump of meat around. That's what started me doubting the ethical acceptability of abortion on request."

Nathanson's initial insight about the humanity of the unborn child had nothing to do with religion.

Dr. Nathanson's acknowledgment of the humanity of the unborn child had no conscious religious tone to it. He was an atheistic Jew. "I had not a seedling of faith to nourish me," he wrote. Embryology itself, confirmed by the ultrasound, led him to acknowledge that there was no significant difference between the humanity of the mother and that of her unborn child, that would justify killing her baby.³¹

A Blind Man's Perspective

Andrea Bocelli

Famed Italian tenor Andrea Bocelli is a singer/songwriter whose recordings are some of the best selling of all time. The fact that he was born with congenital glaucoma and became blind at age 12 has not dampened his zest for life or diminished his success or musical ability.

In a video on YouTube, in the midst of a concert he pauses to tell what he calls "a little story." As Bocelli runs his fingers over the keyboard of his piano, he tells of a young pregnant woman who is hospitalized for an attack of appendicitis. After undergoing medical treatment for her affliction, she is told by

doctors that she should abort her baby, for it would surely be born with disabilities.

As Bocelli thoughtfully plucks the keys of the piano, the notes gently swelling, he says that the courageous young woman decided not to have an abortion, and the child was born. A smile breaks across his face and with deep emotion he says, “That woman was my mother, and I was the child—maybe I’m partisan, but I can say that it was the right choice.”

A Mother’s Perspective

Robin Jones Gunn

Years ago, I woke in the middle of the night with images in my mind of something I’d seen the day before when I was at the park with our two toddlers. I got up and padded to the kitchen table when I spilled my thoughts about the impression and titled the bit of prose *Autumn Dance*.

She stood a short distance from her guardian at the park this afternoon, her distinctive features revealing that although her body blossomed into young adulthood, her mind would always remain a child’s.

My children ran and jumped and sifted sand through perfect, coordinated fingers. Caught up in fighting over a shovel, they didn’t notice when the wind changed. But she did. A wild autumn wind spinning leaves into amber flurries. I called to my boisterous son and jostled my daughter. Time to go. Mom still has lots to do today. My rosy-cheeked boy stood tall, watching with wide-eyed fascination, the gyrating dance of the Down syndrome girl as she scooped up leaves and showered herself with a twirling rain of autumn jubilation. With each twist and hop she sang deep, earthly grunts—a canticle of praise



meant for the One whose breath causes the leaves to tremble from the trees.

“Hurry up! Let’s go! Seat belts on?” I started the car. In the rear view mirror I studied her one more time through my misty eyes. And then the tears came. Not tears of pity for her—the tears are for me. For I am far too sophisticated to publicly shout praises to my Creator. I am whole and intelligent and normal, and so I weep because I will never know the severe mercy that frees such a child and bids her come dance in the autumn leaves.³²

A Civil Rights Activist’s Perspective

Dr. Alveda King

My uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” As a woman who regrets her own abortions, I can truly say that abortion is a grave injustice to fathers, mothers, women and their children. The sting in the African-American community is especially brutal. When we said we will no longer sit on the back of the bus, a place was being reserved for us—and our children—down at the abortion clinic.

In the days of slavery, blacks were counted as 3/5 persons for the purpose of apportionment in Congress. Today, the preborn are not seen as persons for the purpose of protection by the 14th amendment.

When I see a pregnant woman, I see two unique human persons, each with its own DNA makeup and worthy of dignity, respect and protection. As a civil rights activist, I fight for the rights of all persons, born and unborn. My father, A.D. King, and my uncle, Dr. Martin Luther King, fought for the civil rights of blacks. Today, I fight for the civil rights of the preborn and their parents. Abortion is the civil rights movement of our day.

A Journalist’s Perspective

Maria Gallagher

As a journalist, I embraced the pro-choice philosophy based on the twin pillars of reasonability and convenience. But as I began to put my journalistic skills to work, conducting more in-depth research, I discovered some startling facts—that a heart starts beating only 24 days after conception and that brain waves can be detected a mere 43 days after a child is

conceived. I came to see that life must have a logical beginning, not an arbitrary one based on subjective feelings. Reason led me to the pro-life movement; careful analytical thinking keeps me there. Where once I saw only one individual, now I see two—mother and child, connected by a sacred bond that no human being has a right to sever.

I believe that empowering pregnant women—giving them the support they deserve—is the fundamental human rights issue of the 21st century. Just being one small part of this millennial movement gives me tremendous hope. As an advocacy journalist and as a legislative director, I call attention to the needs of both mother and child. Both deserve compassion and honor. My dream is that all pregnant women and their babies will be celebrated and cherished, making abortion unimaginable.

A Lawyer's Perspective

Anne O'Connor, J.D.

In law school when we studied *Roe v. Wade*, I was surprised to read that the Supreme Court Justices purposefully declined to address the issue of when life begins. To me, that seemed the paramount issue to address.

We have scientific/medical guidelines to determine when life has ended. Why is it so difficult to apply scientific/medical standards to determine when life has begun? Those scientific/medical facts reveal that life begins early in the womb.

Women don't need to be sheltered from these facts and given a fabricated constitutional right to a procedure to terminate that life under the guise of "choice." Women are smart, bold, courageous and loving. We not only deserve, but can handle, all the facts. When we are pregnant, there are two of us in the equation.

It was that day in law school that I realized what a great wrong was happening in our society—not only to the unborn child, but to women. Women choose abortion because they are not given all the facts on the life emerging inside them. They often choose abortion because they feel like they have no other choice. That's not freedom to choose—that's oppression.

From that day sitting in my Constitutional Law class forward, I have dedicated my career to helping

women so they never choose to abort because they felt they have no other choice. We women deserve better than that.

A Doctor's Perspective

Freda Bush, M.D.

As a doctor, I was taught when I cared for a pregnant woman, I cared for two: the pregnant woman and her unborn child. Anything you did to the mother, any medications you prescribed for her, you had to consider the effect on the child she was carrying inside her body. That truth is still taught in medical school. With this basic science education, how does a doctor forget the baby in the womb is a person even when it is unplanned or unwanted? Medical ethics and my own conscience demand that I promote the health and well-being of both.

For 40 years, I have delivered thousands of babies. It has been a joy to place the babies into the waiting arms of their mothers. Then I see two unique persons—the mother and her child—embracing and crying tears of joy.

Pregnancy is not a disease. I pray for the day we all in the medical profession have the courage to protect and defend the lives of both of our patients:

the mother and her unborn child.

A Former Abortion Clinic Manager's Perspective

Susan Thayer

I began working at Planned Parenthood because I had always believed that their mission was to offer health care for women and to prevent abortions. Now, I see that I was naive.

For 17 years I managed their clinic in Storm Lake, Iowa, which didn't do surgical abortions. But then, I was pressured to offer "web cam abortions" in which a doctor in a remote location would prescribe the abortion pill without ever meeting the patient.

A knot formed in my stomach as my boss talked increasing our abortion numbers, along with our profits. I knew that such abortions would destroy the lives of innocent babies and put the lives of their mothers at risk. I objected—and in late 2008 I was fired.

After pondering my own life and choices, and seeking God's forgiveness and leading, I decided I couldn't keep silent about what was happening at the clinic. In 2011, I organized a peaceful 40 Days for Life prayer vigil outside my former clinic, praying for my former coworkers and for the women entering their doors. Less than a year later, that clinic closed its doors forever!

When I see a pregnant woman, I see two lives, and I speak up for both.

An Aborted Child's Perspective

Melissa Ohden

In 1977, five days after a saline abortion, Melissa Ohden was delivered and left on a table to die.

(My) mother had an abortion during her fifth month of pregnancy. The type of procedure was a saline-infusion abortion, and what that does is scald the child to death while they're still in the womb. Then, they induce labor and a dead baby should be born.

I was believed to be dead, and I was actually left for dead. I was placed along the bedside table. As the nurse was tending to (my mom), she realized that I was making small movements, and I was making grunting noises. So they realized that here I had been aborted, but I survived.

The doctors remarked that I looked like I was about 31 weeks gestational age. (They told my) adoptive family, "She's probably not going to live for very long. And if she does, she's going to be blind or deaf or have some sort of emotional or mental disability."

Today, Melissa has a master's degree in social work and has worked in the fields of substance abuse, mental health, domestic violence and sexual assault counseling, and child welfare. She is healthy, married, is a mother to a young daughter of her own, and she shares her story around the world, providing a voice for the voiceless.³³ ■

5 Quotes Worth Noting

Frederica Mathewes-Green

What can we do to help women who get pregnant and would rather not be? For a book I was writing, I went around the country talking to women who have had an abortion and to women who provide care for pregnant women. I had presumed that most abortions are prompted by problems that are financial or practical in nature.

But to my surprise, I found something very different. What I heard most frequently in my interviews was that the reason for the abortion was not financial or practical. The core reason I heard was, "I had the abortion because someone I love told me to." It was either the father of the child or else her own mother, who was pressuring the woman to have the abortion.

Again and again, I learned that women had abortions because they felt abandoned, they felt isolated and afraid. As one woman said, "I felt like everyone would support me if I had the abortion, but if I had the baby I'd be alone." When I asked, "Is there anything anyone could have done? What would you have needed in order to have had that child?" I heard the same answer over and over: "I needed a friend. I felt so alone. I felt like I didn't have a choice. If only one person had stood by me, even a stranger, I would have had that baby."³⁴

Francis Schaeffer

Certainly every Christian ought to be praying and working to nullify the abominable abortion law. But as we work and pray, we should have in mind not only this important issue as though it stood alone. Rather, we should be struggling and praying that this whole other total entity "(this godless) worldview" can be rolled back with all its results across all of life.

Lelia Chealey

Some Christians may think that, in taking a stand for the unborn, it is part of their job to call out the cold-hearted mother who has made this choice. As a Christian woman who did make the choice to abort my child, let me tell what you do when you call me a murderer.

I'm not going to go into a sob story and try to convince you that my choice was right. It wasn't and it never will be. I took the life of my child.

I can never justify what I did, nor do I want to. But every time you take your Pharisee stance and call me a murderer, you are inches away from erasing everything Jesus has done to get me to the point of using my story for His glory. Trust me when I say that you do not want me to return to the pit He rescued me from.³⁵



Billy Graham

Some years ago, my wife, Ruth, was reading the draft of a book I was writing. When she finished a section describing the terrible downward spiral of our nation's moral standards and the idolatry

of worshipping false gods such as technology and sex, she startled me by exclaiming, "If God doesn't punish America, He'll have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."

I wonder what Ruth would think of America if she were alive today. In the years since she made that remark, millions of babies have been aborted and our nation seems largely unconcerned. Self-centered indulgence, pride, and a lack of shame over sin are now emblems of the American lifestyle.

My heart aches for America and its deceived people. The wonderful news is that our Lord is a God of mercy, and He responds to repentance. In Jonah's day, Nineveh was the lone world superpower—wealthy, unconcerned and self-centered. When the Prophet Jonah finally traveled to Nineveh and proclaimed God's warning, people heard and repented. I believe the same thing can happen once again, this time in our nation.³⁶



Mother Teresa

Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching the people to love, but to use violence to get what they want. That is why the

greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.³⁷

America needs no words from me to see how your decision in *Roe v. Wade* has deformed a great nation. The so-called right to abortion has pitted mothers against their children and women against men. It has sown violence and discord at the heart of the most intimate human relationships. It has aggravated the derogation of the father's role in an increasingly fatherless society. It has portrayed the greatest of gifts—a child—as a competitor, an intrusion and an inconvenience. It has nominally accorded mothers unfettered dominion over the independent lives of their physically dependent sons and daughters.

And, in granting this unconscionable power, it has exposed many women to unjust and selfish demands from their husbands or other sexual partners. Human rights are not a privilege conferred by government. They are every human being's entitlement by virtue of his humanity. The right to life does not depend, and must not be declared to be contingent, on the pleasure of anyone else, not even a parent or a sovereign.³⁸

"There is a pain, far worse than hunger or poverty; it is the pain of being rejected."

— Mother Teresa³⁹

We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty.⁴⁰



Scott Klusendorf

In 1955, Emmett Till, a 14-year-old black youth, traveled from Chicago to visit his cousin in the town of Money, Mississippi. Upon arrival, he bragged about his white girlfriends back in Chicago. This was surprising to

his cousin and the cousin's friends because blacks in Mississippi during the 50s didn't make eye contact with whites, let alone date them! Both actions were considered disrespectful. Later that day, Emmett, his cousin, and a small group of black males entered Bryant's Store where, egged-on by the other males, 14-year-old Emmett flirted with a 21 year-old white

married woman behind the counter. After purchasing candy, he either whistled at her or said something mildly flirtatious. (*Reports vary.*) The cousin and the others warned him he was in for trouble.

A few days later, at 2 A.M., Emmett was taken at gunpoint from his uncle's home by the clerk's husband and another man. After savagely beating him, they killed him with a single bullet to the head. Emmett's bloated corpse was found three days later in the Tallahatchie River. A cotton gin fan had been shoved over his head and tied with barbed wire. His face was partially crushed and beaten almost beyond recognition. The local Sheriff placed Emmett's body in a sealed coffin and shipped it back to his mother in Chicago.

When Mamie Till got the body, she made a stunning announcement: there would be an open-casket funeral for her son Emmett. People protested and reminded her how much this would upset everyone. Mamie agreed, but countered, **"I want the whole world to see what they did to my boy."**

The photo of Emmett's mangled body in that open casket was published in *Jet* magazine and it helped launch the Civil Rights Movement in America. Three months later in Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks refused to go to the back of the bus when ordered to do so. She said the image of Emmett Till gave her the courage to stand her ground.

It's time for pro-life Christians to open the casket on abortion. We should do it lovingly but truthfully. We should do it in our churches during the primary worship services, comforting those who grieve with the gospel of forgiveness. We should do it in our Christian high schools and colleges, combining visuals with a persuasive defense of the pro-life view that's translatable to non-Christians. But open the casket we must. Until we do, Americans will continue tolerating an injustice they never have to look at.⁴⁰

The Manhattan Declaration

A culture of death inevitably cheapens life in all its stages and conditions by promoting the belief that lives that are imperfect, immature or inconvenient are discardable. As predicted by many prescient persons, the cheapening of life that began with abortion has now metastasized. ... At the other end of life, an increasingly powerful movement to promote assisted

suicide and "voluntary" euthanasia threatens the lives of vulnerable elderly and disabled persons.⁴¹

Some People Say "No One Really Knows When Life Begins"

These physicians do, not based upon religious beliefs, but biology:

Dr. Micheline M. Mathews-Roth

It is incorrect to say that biological data cannot be decisive. ... It is scientifically correct to say that an individual human life begins at conception.

Dr. Jerome Lejeune

To accept the fact that after fertilization has taken place a new human has come into being is no longer a matter of taste or opinion ... it is plain experimental evidence. Each individual has a very neat beginning, at conception.

Dr. Alfred Bongiovanni

I am no more prepared to say that these early stages represent an incomplete human being than I would be to say that the child prior to the dramatic effects of puberty ... is not a human being. ... I have learned from my earliest medical education that human life begins at the time of conception.

Biological Facts to Remember⁴²

As measured from the moment of fertilization:

- At 3 weeks, the heart begins to beat.
- At 6 weeks, tooth buds for "baby teeth" are taking shape in the jaw.
- At 8 weeks, the brain is producing 250,000 new neurons each minute.
- At 9 weeks, all the major organ systems are present. ■

6 Pastoral Wisdom

Pastoral Perspectives on the Sanctity of Human Life



Russell Moore:
Why I Hate Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

I hate Sanctity of Human Life Sunday because I'm reminded that as I'm preaching there are babies warmly nestled in wombs who won't be there tomorrow.

I'm reminded that there are children, maybe even blocks from my pulpit, who'll be slapped, punched and burned with cigarettes before nightfall. I'm reminded that there are elderly men and women languishing away in loneliness, their lives pronounced to be a waste.

But I also love Sanctity of Human Life Sunday when I think about the fact that I serve a congregation with ex-orphans all around, adopted into loving families. I love to reflect on the men and women who serve every week in pregnancy centers for women in crisis. And I love to see men and women who have aborted babies find their sins forgiven, even this sin, and their consciences cleansed by Christ.

We'll always need Christmas. We'll always need Easter. But I hope, please Lord, someday soon, that Sanctity of Human Life Day is unnecessary.⁴³

John MacArthur

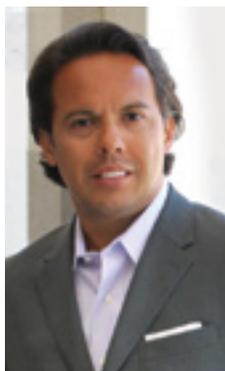
No human being ... is ever conceived outside God's will or ever conceived apart from God's image. Life is a gift from God created in His own image.

Pope John Paul II

It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop. A society lacks solid foundations when, on the one hand, it asserts values such as the dignity of the person, justice and peace, but then, on the other hand, radically acts to the contrary by allowing or tolerating

a variety of ways in which human life is devalued and violated, especially where it is weak or marginalized. Only respect for life can be the foundation and guarantee of the most precious and essential goods of society, such as democracy and peace.

“The unborn child ... though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human being ... and should not be robbed of the life which it has not yet begun to enjoy.” – *John Calvin*



Samuel Rodriguez

As we commemorate MLK's "I Have a Dream" speech, permit me to share my dreams.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that this generation will recognize the image of God in every human being, in and out of the womb, without exception.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that Christ followers will stop hiding at the bottom of the threshing floor and emerge as mighty heroes of righteousness and justice.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that as Christians we will be known not by what we oppose or attempt to impose but rather by what we propose; eternal life through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that the children of the cross realize that today's complacency is tomorrow's captivity, that moral stagnation leads to spiritual atrophy and that there is no such animal as comfortable Christianity.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that children will not be aborted, marriages will thrive and religious liberty will prevail for generations to come.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that truth will never be sacrificed on the altar of expediency, that love will overcome hate and the prophetic will silence the pathetic.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that this generation will reconcile Billy Graham's message with Dr. King's march, sanctification with service and conviction with compassion.

I have a dream.

I have a dream that one day we primarily see ourselves not as black, white, brown or yellow, Hispanic, charismatic or automatic but first and foremost as children of the living God.

*The dream lives!*⁴⁴

The Didache

Do not murder a child by abortion or kill a newborn infant.

Tertullian

It does not matter whether you take away a life that is born, or destroy one that is coming to the birth. In both instances, the destruction is murder.



John Piper

On March 6, 1857, the Supreme Court, in *Dred Scott vs. Sandford*, ruled that no act of Congress or territorial legislature could make laws banning slavery. The fundamental argument was that slaves are not free and equal persons but the property

of their masters. The ruling is analogous to *Roe vs. Wade* because today no state may make a law banning abortion to protect the unborn. The argument is similar: basically because the unborn are at the sovereign disposal of their mothers and do not have personal standing in their own right. There was no consensus in this country on the personhood and rights of slaves. We were split down the middle.

But the issue was so fundamental that the states went to war, and in the end the Lincoln administration overturned the *Dred Scott* decision. And today, 130 years later, we look back with amazing consensus and marvel at the blindness of our forefathers.⁴⁵

R.C. Sproul, Sr.

At the heart of the abortion issue rests one overarching question: Is abortion a form of murder? In other words, does abortion involve the willful destruction of a living human person? One of the chief functions of law is to protect the rights of individuals. To be sure, every law restricts someone's freedom in order to protect someone else's rights.

John Piper

Christ died that we might live. This is the opposite of abortion. Abortion kills that someone might live differently.

Samuel Rodriguez

We must stand committed to reconciling the vertical image of God in every human being with the horizontal habits and actions of Christ. This requires a new narrative, an alternative discourse where we stand for truth without sacrificing civility.

For the image of God lives in all human beings—black and white, rich and poor, born and unborn, conservative and liberal, citizen and undocumented. Our challenge is to see the image of God in the suffering, the marginalized, the oppressed and the hurting. Our challenge is to see the image of God in every human being—including those with whom we disagree.

Correspondingly, Hispanic evangelicals remain committed to advancing not the agenda of the donkey or the elephant, but only the agenda of the Lamb, which is one of righteousness and justice, sanctification and service, covenant and community, holiness and humility, and conviction and compassion. It is this agenda that provides the moral imperative to defend biblical truth with love and civility.⁴⁶

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Destruction of the embryo in the mother's womb is a violation of the right to live which God has bestowed upon this nascent life.

R.C. Sproul, Jr.

The great tragedy ... is not ultimately that the heathen, those who the Bible tells us “love death,” are killing their children. Rather, the great tragedy is that those who have been bought by the blood of the Lamb just don’t care. Of course the heathen kill their children. They, after all, are the heathen. But we who were dead in our trespasses and sins, but who have been made alive, who have been set free by the death of the One Innocent, ought not to give up.

John Piper

If we were made to watch a doctor pull off the little baby’s legs and arms one by one and place them on the table like a dentist removing cotton from your mouth—if all Americans were made to see what it really is, the pro-life goal of abortion being unthinkable (not just illegal) would be much nearer.

John MacArthur

Bags of babies are found by trash compactors (as we all know); yet on the other side of this, a wounded American eagle was found recently in Maryland and rushed to emergency treatment. However, it died and a \$5,000 reward was offered for the arrest of whoever injured it. It is illegal to ship a pregnant lobster: it’s a \$1,000 fine. In the State of Massachusetts there is an anti-cruelty law that makes it illegal to award a goldfish as a prize. Why? This is what it says, “To protect the tendency to dull humanitarian feelings and to corrupt morals of those who abuse them.” The same people that want to save the goldfish are leading the parade, usually, to kill the babies.⁴⁷

Kevin DeYoung

Shall we reserve human dignity only for those humans who are not dependent on others? Do we deserve to live only when we can live on our own? Is the four-month-old fetus less than human because she needs her mom for life? Is the four-month-old infant less than human when she still needs her mom for life? What if you depend on dialysis or insulin or a breathing apparatus? Is value a product of fully functioning vitality? Is independence a prerequisite for human identity? Are we worth only what we can think, accomplish, and do on our own? ■

7 Lessons from History⁴⁸



The first-century Christians faced great challenges living within the widespread immorality of the Roman Empire. The surrounding world was a place of extensive sexual perversity, infanticide,

abortion, gladiatorial games, human sacrifices and suicide. One commonality was the overall low regard for human life. Life was highly expendable for the ancient Romans. As St. Augustine—once a pagan himself—wrote, “the pagan gods taught the people no morals” (City of God).

Early Christians not only figured out how to survive in the surrounding Roman culture, they actually reduced and eradicated many of these practices that undervalued human life. It was the influence of faithful Christians that called people to understand and embrace the sanctity of human life.

It was the influence of faithful Christians that called people to understand and embrace the sanctity of human life.

Speaking up about Infanticide

A common practice in ancient Rome was infanticide, or the killing of infants. Historian Frederic Farrer wrote that “infanticide was infamously universal” among Romans during the early years of Christianity. Infants were killed for deformities, but also for not being born male. Infant girls were particularly vulnerable to infanticide.

For hundreds of years, the early church opposed the practice of infanticide. They would rescue discarded babies and raise them in the Christian faith. Christian writings as far back as the first century condemned the practice of infanticide. Eventually, Christian emperor Valentinian, influenced by Basil of Caesarea, would formally outlaw the practice in 374 A.D.

Speaking up about Abortion

The Greco-Roman world also had a generally low esteem for marriage. There was widespread promiscuity and adultery. Many women found themselves pregnant and sought abortions, which had become commonplace in Rome by the first century. Previous philosophers Plato and Aristotle both taught it was acceptable to abort unwanted babies.

First-century historian Josephus wrote that the biblical laws forbade women from causing abortion. Common ways of inducing abortions in the Greco-Roman world were medicinal potions, referred to as *pharmakeia*. The apostles Paul and John both used this same Greek word when condemning forms of sexual immorality in Galatians and Revelation. It is very likely they had abortion specifically in mind.

Throughout church history, several Christian leaders have taught against the practice of abortion. From Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian in the 2nd century to Martin Luther and John Calvin over 1400 years later. As historian W. E. H. Lecky summarizes, “the value and sanctity of life ... broadly distinguished Christian from Pagan societies.”

Speaking up about the Gladiatorial Games

The Roman writer Ausonius tells us the gladiatorial games were started in Rome in 264 B.C. by Marcius and Decius Brutus. By the time Christians arrived in Rome, there had been hundreds of thousands of gladiators mauled, mangled, and gored to death for at least three hundred years.

Christians were appalled at the gladiatorial games. One Roman pagan criticized Christians, “You do not go to our shows; you take no part in our processions ... you shrink in horror from our sacred [gladiatorial] games.” Many early church leaders instructed Christians to not attend the gladiatorial contests at all. Since Christian emperor Theodosius terminated the games in 404 A.D., Western societies have never again allowed the deliberate killing of people for other people’s enjoyment. ■

8 Music and Video Suggestions

Video Suggestions

The first three videos below can be downloaded at no charge, at BeAVoice.net



Dignity of Human Life

This short video offers a non-political, Biblical look at what it means to be pro-life.

(In English and Spanish)

Carrie’s Story

In this three-minute video, Carrie Gordon Earll—a senior policy analyst at Focus on the Family—shares her regret for an abortion she had during her college years and offers the hope and healing that can be found in Christ.

Faces of Life

Videos submitted to Focus on the Family by



pregnancy centers with permission to share with you. Each three minute video features an abortion-minded woman who shares why she chooses life.

The Miracle of Life

This video shows us how amazing and wonderful the gift of life is through incredible ultrasound video and photos. Available for purchase at HyperPixelsMedia.com

My Life

Using the forum of social media, this video displays the “what could have been” and encourages us to be a voice for life. Available for purchase at Media.PreachingToday.com

Music Suggestions

- [He Knows My Name](#) – Tommy Walker
- [Carrier](#) – Jared Anderson
- [I Belong](#) – Kathryn Scott

- [Search Me, Know Me](#) – Kathryn Scott
- [Child of God](#) – Kathryn Scott
- [Will Justice Reign?](#) – Kathryn Scott
- [Faithful Father / Your Faithfulness](#)
– Brian Doerksen
- [In Christ Alone](#) – Keith Getty & Stuart Townend
- [Fearfully and Wonderfully Made](#) – Matt Redman
- [The Healing Has Begun](#) – Matthew West
- [Meant to Be](#) – Stephen Curtis Chapman ■



9 Recommended Resources

Find a Pregnancy Care Center Near You:

OptionLine.org

Pregnancy care centers and clinics provide services to women facing unexpected pregnancies as well as post-abortion healing resources and small groups. Most can offer speakers and testimonies from women who have found help and healing. We encourage you to invite a speaker to share a testimony during a Sunday service.

Abortion Changes You

AbortionChangesYou.com

Abortion impacts a wide circle of family members and friends. This is a safe place for mothers, fathers, grandparents, friends and siblings to begin to process that impact and begin the healing process.

Surrendering the Secret

SurrenderingTheSecret.com

This 10-week DVD study is designed to bring women together who understand the need for seeking peace with the past and desire a better understanding of God's plan for making the most painful losses of our past work for His glory.

Surrender the Secret Online Reality Show

KnockTV.com/SurrenderTheSecret

An innovative way to message God's grace and forgiveness—watch five women go through a 10-session Bible Study on a smart phone, tablet or computer, and find local help.

And Then There Were None

ATTWN.org

As the director of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Texas, Abby Johnson thought she was helping women. One day, as she was assisting with an abortion, Abby was struck with an undeniable reality: "On the ultrasound, I saw a child struggling for her life, and I realized at that point that two lives are impacted by every abortion." Now an articulate advocate for the right to life, she reaches out to others who want to leave the abortion business. Find stories from clinic workers who thought they were helping women,

who've now reconsidered their involvement and have left the industry for more life-affirming work.

Randy Alcorn: Eternal Perspectives Ministries

EPM.org

EPM will send a free copy of *ProLife Answers to ProChoice Arguments* to pastors who request the book. Please contact EPM by e-mail to request your copy: **Info@EPM.org**

Hope After Abortion—Project Rachel

HopeAfterAbortion.com

Project Rachel is the post-abortion healing ministry of the Catholic Church that arose in response to the stories women told about the hurt they experienced after their abortion. It is an outreach of the Catholic Church, but it is open to anyone who is struggling after an abortion loss. It is able to help women and men; parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and others whose lives have been impacted by an abortion loss. At the website, visitors can find local help by searching on a map.

Perinatal Comfort Care

PerinatalComfortCare.org

This is a program designed for parents who have received a devastating prenatal diagnosis of “incompatible with life” and choose to continue the pregnancy. The program offers guidance by a Perinatal Nurse Navigator, who has experience in obstetrics, and provides clear and relevant information focusing on the needs of parents and their baby. They are here to journey with families as they plan, honor and celebrate their baby's lifetime.

Medical Research & Position Papers

American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists:

AAPLOG.org

Excellent source for medical studies and position papers about abortion, including its impact on women's health. Helpful information about abortion to save the mother's life and other questions.

WECARE: World Expert Consortium for Abortion Research and Education

WeCareExperts.org

WECARE brings together credentialed scientists with a research program on the physical, psychological and/or relational effects of abortion on women and those closest to them to engage in international research collaboration, scientific information dissemination, professional education and consultation.

Alliance for Post-Abortion Research and Training:

StandApart.org

The dual purpose of the Alliance for Post-Abortion Research is to engage in the scientific study of the mental health risks of abortion and to disseminate accurate information concerning such risks to those who provide education about abortion and/or post-abortion counseling. Click on the Resources tab for helpful fact sheets.

The Endowment for Human Development

EHD.org

This nonprofit organization is dedicated to improving health science education and public health. EHD equips educators, clinicians and governments to help everyone appreciate, apply and communicate the science of health and human development. This website is a source of accurate biological facts about human development presented from a politically neutral perspective. ■

YOUR BONUS RESOURCE

VALUING LIFE *from the* START

AGE-SPECIFIC
LESSONS
AND
ACTIVITIES
FOR KIDS
AGES 0-18



A resource by **thriving**
FAMILY

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY®

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Portions of the tool kit were created by Tricia Goyer, D'Arcy Maher, Renee Gray-Wilburn, Susan Martins Miller, Marianne Hering and the *Thriving Family* staff.

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VALUING LIFE *from the* START

It's never too early to educate children about the sanctity of human life—to help them understand that **EACH PERSON, BORN AND PREBORN, IS VALUABLE**. Through age-appropriate activities and discussions, teach your children—from toddler through teen—that every life matters.

EARLY YEARS (ages 0-3)

| | |
|--|---|
| He's Got the Itty-Bitty Babies in His Hands..... | 2 |
| Do They Make Pants That Small?..... | 2 |
| Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes..... | 2 |

DISCOVERY TIME (ages 4-7)

| | |
|--|---|
| Mini-Explorers..... | 4 |
| Made With Care..... | 4 |
| Amazing Facts About Life Before Birth..... | 4 |
| How Big Is Baby?..... | 7 |
| Breath of Life..... | 9 |
| Every Life Is a Gift..... | 9 |
| Reflecting God..... | 9 |

TWEEN AGES (ages 8-12)

| | |
|--|----|
| What the Bible Says About Life Before Birth..... | 10 |
| Every Person Matters..... | 12 |
| Korean Birthday Parties..... | 14 |
| The Big Picture..... | 14 |
| Blessings for Babies..... | 14 |
| Valuing God's Workmanship..... | 14 |
| Helping Children See God in Others..... | 14 |
| Did I Say That?..... | 14 |

TEEN PHASES (ages 13-18)

| | |
|--|----|
| You Are Worthy..... | 16 |
| Rehearse the Message: Preparing Teens to Be a Voice for Life..... | 16 |
| Educate Your Teen..... | 18 |

EARLY YEARS (ages 0-3)

Make preborn babies “real” for toddlers

Young children are naturally curious about newborn babies. We can encourage the same fascination toward preborn babies, as well. Help your child understand that the baby in a mom’s tummy is a real person and that God loves babies not yet born just as He loves each of us.

HE’S GOT THE ITTY-BITTY BABIES IN HIS HANDS

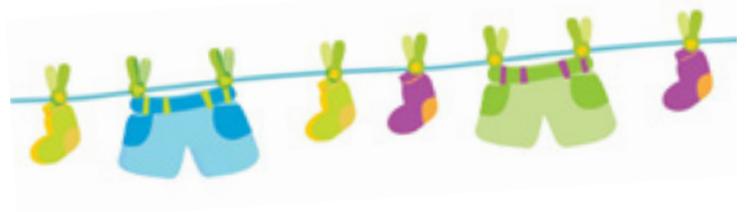
Sing “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” as printed below. Repeat the third verse several times, filling in the blank with the names of people in your family, from the youngest to the oldest. After you’ve finished singing, explain that God cared for each of these people from their first moment in mommy’s tummy.

DO THEY MAKE PANTS THAT SMALL?

Next time you are at a clothing store, show your toddler different sizes of baby clothes. Explain that babies start so tiny that we can’t see them and gradually grow big enough to fit into those clothes.

HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES & TOES

If you have a pregnant friend or family member, ask her to share a photo of an ultrasound. If you have an ultrasound photo of your child, share that and rejoice over the different parts she sees. ■

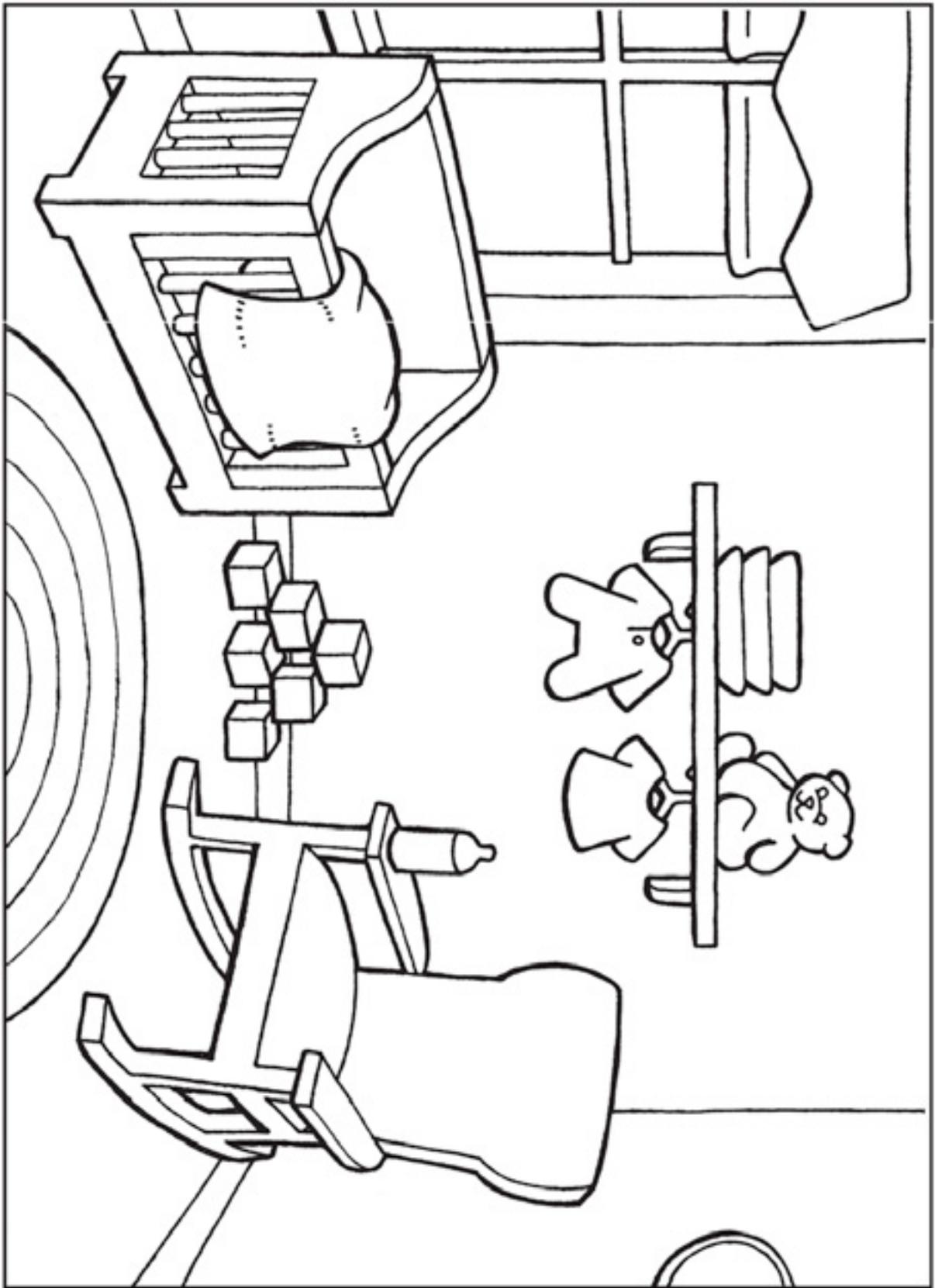


HE’S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS

He’s got the whole world in His hands. *(Repeat three more times)*

He’s got the itty-bitty babies in His hands, *(Repeat two more times)* He’s got the whole world in His hands.

He’s got _____ in His hands, *(Repeat two more times)* He’s got the whole world in His hands.



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DISCOVERY YEARS (ages 4-7)

From the start, everybody (and every body) is amazing

Kids love learning what their bodies can do! Teach your child about fetal development to illustrate that even before birth, we are “fearfully and wonderfully made” with remarkable abilities. Help children develop a deeper understanding of why life is sacred by teaching them that each person, born and preborn, is created in the divine image of God.

MINI-EXPLORERS

Explore your home with your child, using as many of your senses as possible. (Eat a cookie; listen to the noises outside the front door; etc.) Explain that preborn babies explore the “world” inside Mom by moving their arms and legs, listening to voices, even tasting what Mom had for dinner! Point out how blessed we are to have many ways to learn about the world around us, and help your child memorize **Psalm 139:14**—“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”

EXPLORE YOUR HOME WITH YOUR CHILD

MADE WITH CARE

Have a contest to see who can create the best imaginary pet. Give everyone Play-Doh® and set a timer. When the timer rings, let your children explain their creations. Make encouraging comments, such as how carefully they worked on their creatures. But then ask each child, “Why isn’t your pet alive?” Remind your family that God is the only one who can give life. Tell your kids that God knew what He was

doing when He formed them, and that they were “fearfully and wonderfully” made. Teach the words fearfully (to do something with great care) and wonderfully (to do something amazing and marvelous).

AMAZING FACTS ABOUT LIFE BEFORE BIRTH

Did you know that by week eight of gestation, every organ of a developing baby is in place and growing? Teach your child more about fetal development by reading the facts on the following page. Then, explain that preborn babies are fully human, created in the image of our heavenly Father.



*On the very first day that you existed inside of Mom's womb, every detail about you was written in a cell smaller than a grain of salt. God knew what color your hair and eyes would be, whether you would be a boy or a girl, if you'd grow to be short or tall, and the exact shade of your skin. **FROM YOUR FIRST MOMENT, YOU WERE UNIQUELY YOU!***

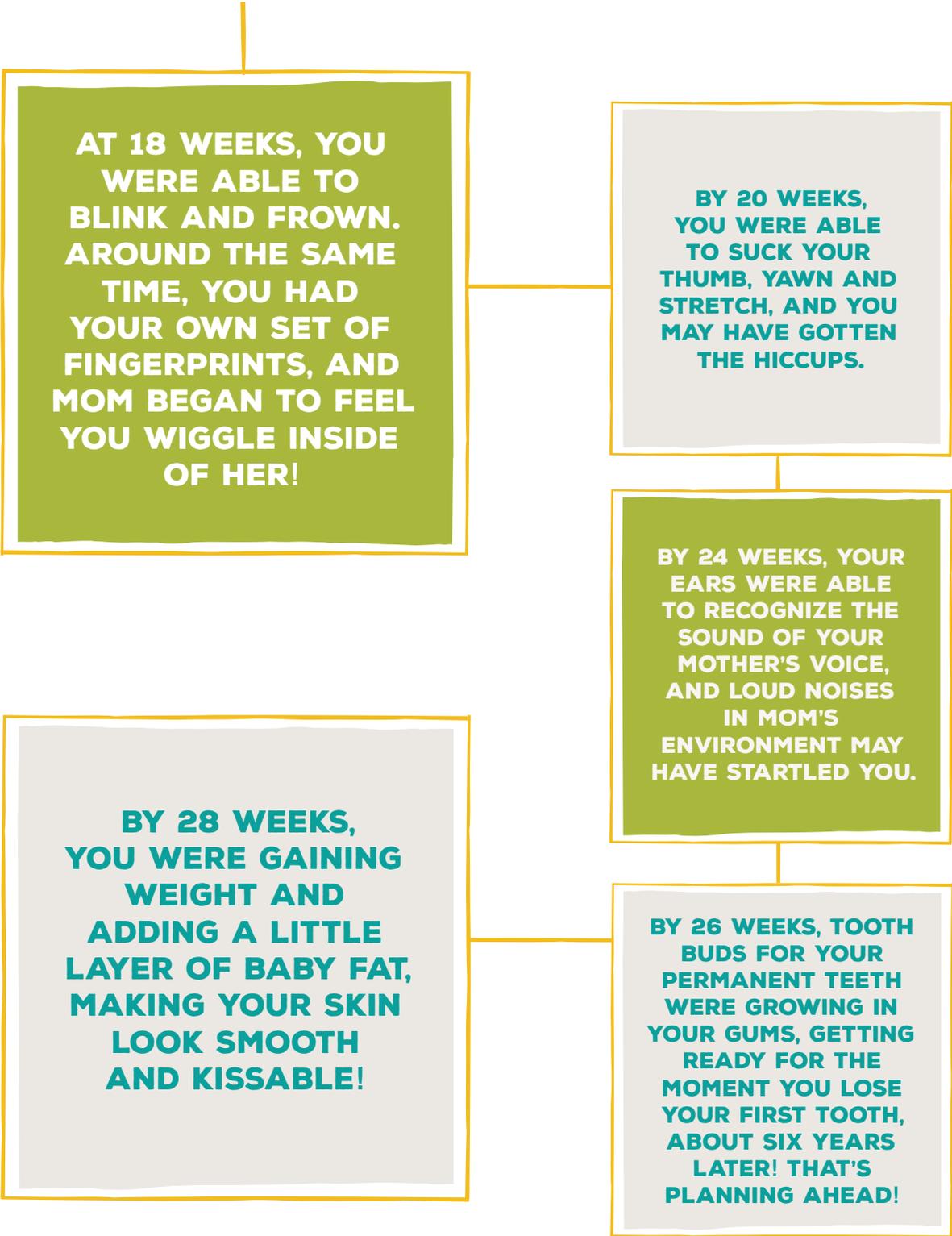
YOUR HEART BEGAN BEATING AFTER ONLY THREE WEEKS IN THE WOMB (POSSIBLY BEFORE MOM EVEN KNEW YOU WERE THERE).

AT JUST SIX WEEKS OF "GESTATION"—A SPECIAL WORD FOR THE TIME YOU SPENT GROWING INSIDE OF MOM—YOUR EYES ARE DEVELOPING AND YOUR LITTLE ARMS AND LEGS ARE BEGINNING TO GROW.

THE TASTE BUDS THAT ALLOW YOU TO ENJOY PIZZA, ICE CREAM AND SPAGHETTI BEGAN TO FORM AFTER JUST EIGHT WEEKS.

ALSO AROUND TEN WEEKS, YOU WERE ABLE TO MOVE YOUR LEGS AND ARMS, ALTHOUGH YOUR MOM MAY NOT HAVE FELT YOUR MOVEMENTS FOR SEVERAL MORE WEEKS.

BY TEN WEEKS GESTATION, YOUR BRAIN WAS GROWING EVERY MINUTE, AND ALTHOUGH YOU HAD TWO LITTLE EARS ON THE SIDE OF YOUR HEAD, YOU COULDN'T HEAR.



*And perhaps the most amazing, wonderful fact of all: **EVEN BEFORE YOU BEGAN TO GROW INSIDE OF YOUR MOM, GOD KNEW YOU AND LOVED YOU!***

How Big Is Baby? To help illustrate the gradual growth of babies in the womb, print out the following two pages and assemble this mini-book with your child according to the instructions. Then, read the book with your child.

Instructions: Print out both pages, and glue them back-to-back. Fold in half lengthwise, cut along dotted lines and put pages in order. *Don't worry—when you put the book together the ages will match the right sizes!*

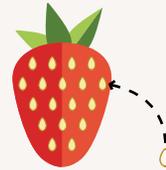
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HOW BIG IS BABY?

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.”—Jeremiah 1:5

“I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.”—Psalm 139:14

**AT 9 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



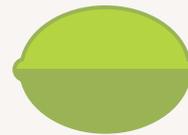
A STRAWBERRY SEED

**AT 8 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A BLUEBERRY

**AT 7 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A LIME

**AT 6 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



AN ONION

How Big Is Baby? To help illustrate the gradual growth of babies in the womb, print out the following two pages and assemble this mini-book with your child according to the instructions. Then, read the book with your child.

Instructions: Print out both pages, and glue them back-to-back. Fold in half lengthwise, cut along dotted lines and put pages in order. *Don't worry—when you put the book together the ages will match the right sizes!*

**AT 1 MONTH,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A SMALL PUMPKIN

**AT 2 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A CANTALOUPE

**AT 3 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A BUTTERNUT SQUASH

**AT 4 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



AN EGGPLANT

**AT 5 MONTHS,
BABY IS THE
SIZE OF...**



A GRAPEFRUIT

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BREATH OF LIFE

Use this activity to help your kids understand that life is sacred. Using a bottle of bubble solution, blow bubbles into the air while encouraging your children to clap them, pinch them or catch them in their hands. Ask how the bubbles feel against their skin. Ask your kids what is inside the bubbles. Air? No, breath. Let them take a turn blowing the bubbles.

GOD FILLED MAN WITH HIS BREATH WHEN HE CREATED US

Now share this truth: Just as we can fill a bubble with our breath, God filled humans with His breath when He created us. Since it is easy for a bubble to pop or burst, it must be treated with care. In the same way, human life is fragile and must be protected because it is so valuable. Of everything He created, God only shared His breath with humans, which makes us His most special creation.

Finally, blow more bubbles together and talk about the differences in their sizes. Think about the people in your family and discuss each person's uniqueness. Explain that though we are all different, we are similar in this: **We have been made in God's image.**

EVERY LIFE IS A GIFT

Help a young school-age child understand that life is a gift from God by using gift tags that say "To:" and "From:" (You can make your own using strips of paper.)

Take these tags with you as your child looks around your home and names his favorite possessions. Ask, "Who does this belong to?" and, "Where did we get it?" Recognize each item's ownership by filling out gift tags accordingly and attaching them. Turn the

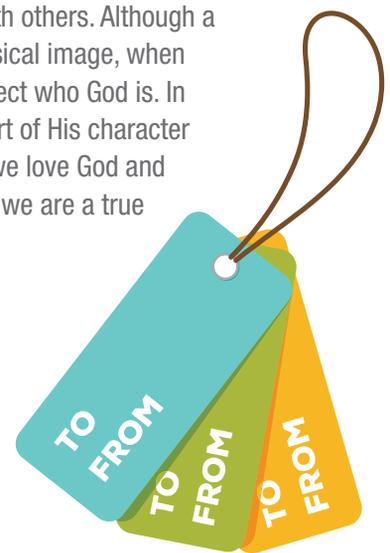
discussion to your child. Fill out a tag to read "To: [your child's name]" and "From: God," then attach it to your child. Explain, "We can give each other things, but only God gives life." Have your child feel his own heartbeat and see if he can catch the rise and fall of his chest as he breathes. Explain that his very breath is a gift from God. And remind him that since he is made in God's image, his life is very special. With your child, say a prayer thanking God for the gift of life He has given.

REFLECTING GOD

Have your child close his eyes as you apply several dots of color to his face using washable markers or eyeliner pencils. Put away the markers and ask him to tell you what colors are on his face and where. Of course, he can't, but it'll be fun watching him try. Now, place him in front of a mirror and ask him to tell you what colors he sees.

Explain to your child that we cannot see our own face; we can only see a reflection of what we look like. This is called an image. When God made us, He made an image, or reflection of himself. The mirror shows us who we are on the outside, but God made us to be a reflection of His nature and image on the inside. We're different from any of God's other creations because we alone are made like Him.

Because of this, God wants us to imitate who He is when we interact with others. Although a mirror reflects our physical image, when we love others, we reflect who God is. In this way, others see part of His character through us. The more we love God and other people, the more we are a true reflection of Him. ■



TWEEN YEARS (ages 8-12)

God has plans for each of us

By their tween years, many children understand that the way you've taught them to view the world is different from how others may view it. Teach your child that you follow what God says in the Bible, even when others don't agree. Discuss how God's plan for our lives began even before our first moment in our mother's womb, and communicate that all babies are gifts to be celebrated.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT LIFE BEFORE BIRTH

Print out this page and the next page. Cut along the lines so that each verse is on a separate slip of paper. Place the verses in a bowl. Have your child pull the verses out of the bowl one at a time, and read them aloud. Then ask them to match the verse with the lesson it teaches about life before birth. When finished, glue the verses beside the correct lessons.

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

(Genesis 1:27)

"Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. I thank you, High God—you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration—what a creation!"

(paraphrase of Psalm 139:13-14, The Message)

"Children are a gift from the Lord. They are a reward from him."

(Psalm 127:3, NIV)

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you."

(Jeremiah 1:5)

"Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, The days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day."

(paraphrase of Psalm 139:16, The Message)

**EVEN BEFORE I
WAS BORN, GOD
KNEW WHAT
LIFE HAD IN
STORE FOR ME.**

**I WAS A GIFT
FROM GOD!**

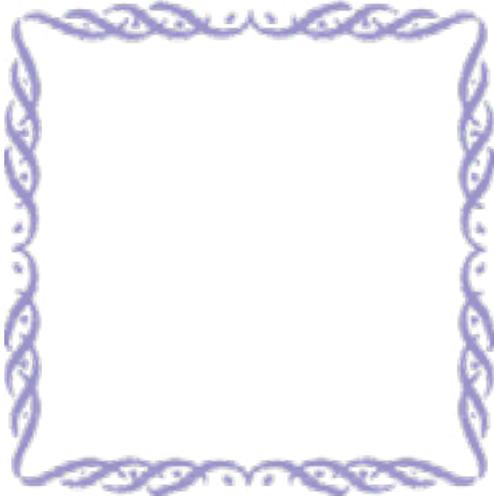
**GOD MADE
ME IN HIS
OWN IMAGE.**

**BEFORE I WAS
BORN, I WAS
MARVELOUSLY
MADE, INSIDE
AND OUT, BY GOD.**

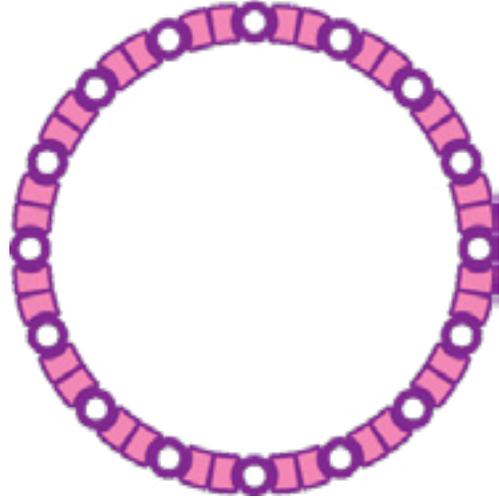
**GOD KNEW
ALL ABOUT ME
EVEN BEFORE I
WAS CREATED!**

EVERY PERSON MATTERS

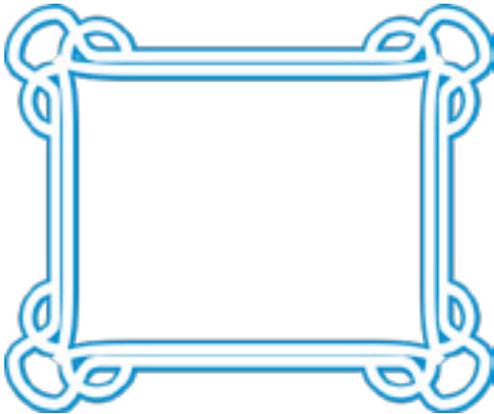
Print this page. Help your child collect photos of family members to place in the frames, or have your child draw portraits of family members instead. Discuss how each person in your family has made an impact on your child's life. Consider what life would be like if one of the family members were never born to live out God's plan for him or her.



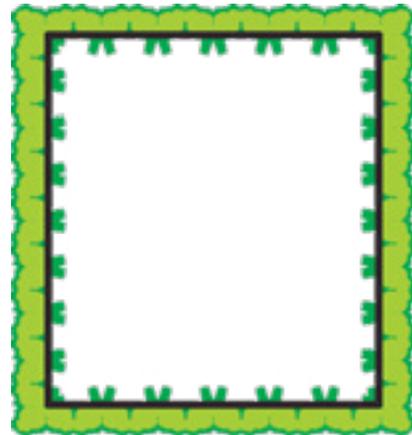
has influenced my life by _____



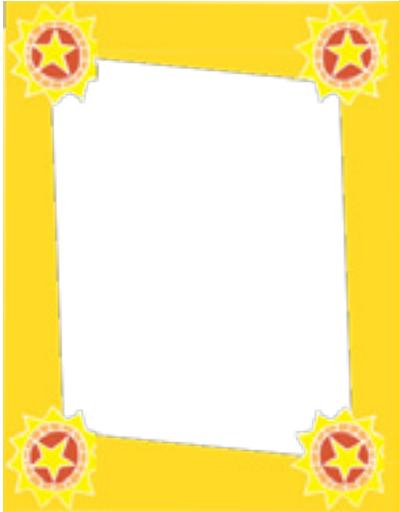
has influenced my life by _____



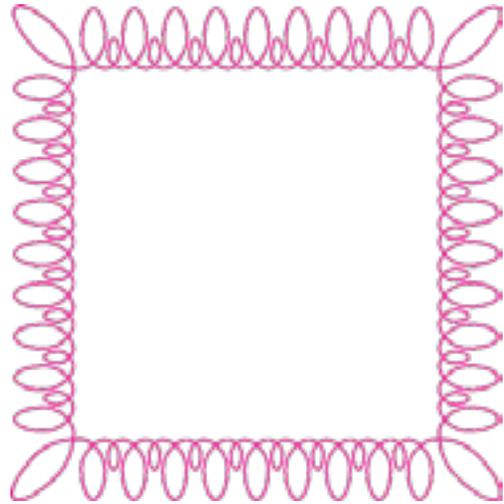
has influenced my life by _____



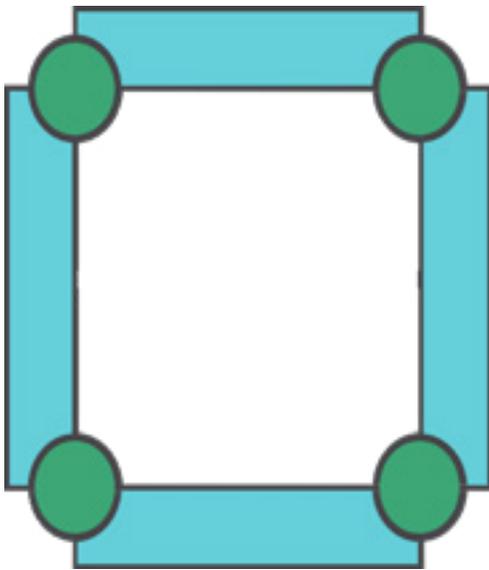
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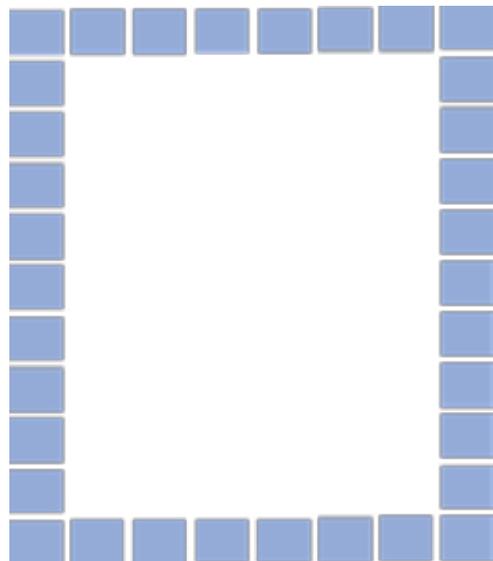
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KOREAN BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Although some people believe that a preborn baby is not yet a person, the Bible teaches that life—and personhood—begins at our creation, not our birth. The Korean culture affirms that life begins at conception by including the time in a mother’s womb when calculating a person’s age. Remind your child of his “true” age and consider celebrating the special day nine months prior to his next birthday.

NURTURE COMPASSION TOWARD BABIES AND EXPECTANT PARENTS

THE BIG PICTURE

Work on a puzzle with your child. As you work, the picture is revealed a little at a time. Similarly, when a child is born, we only see a glimpse of who he will become. He continually changes and grows, gradually revealing to us “pieces” of himself. God, on the other hand, sees the complete picture before we are even created. Read Jeremiah 1:5 together, and discuss how God knew each one of us before we were even formed.

BLESSINGS FOR BABIES

Nurture compassion toward babies and expectant parents. Take your child shopping and allow him to select baby clothes, blankets or other supplies to give to those in need. Later, visit a pregnancy resource center or shelter for pregnant women to donate the items in person.

VALUING GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

Dani’s mother would drag her to thrift stores and antique shops in search of collectibles and other treasures. Whenever her mom would look at a price tag, she would ask Dani, “And what are you worth?” Well trained by the ritual, Dani would respond, “I’m priceless because God made me.” Through everyday conversations, you can instill a healthy spiritual identity in your children by reinforcing that they are “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14).

Valuing God’s workmanship is foundational to a child’s healthy self-image.

Ask your kids the following questions:

- When do you feel that you’re not worth as much as others?
- How do your friends show they value you?
- If you were on display at a collectibles show, how would you describe yourself? (Listen, and then read Genesis 1:27 together.)
- How does God assign value to you since you’re made in His image?
- What can I do to help you feel valued at home?

HELPING CHILDREN SEE GOD IN OTHERS

Together, make a list of the ways your child was “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Then during the week, affirm your child’s gifts and personality traits. **Discuss these concepts with your children:** *How do you know if something is alive? Where does life come from? What is the difference between human and animal life? (God made us in His likeness. We’re set apart to be like Him.) If human life comes from God and belongs to God, how should you treat . . . your siblings? . . . your grandparents? . . . a classmate with special needs? . . . your teachers? . . . someone who teases you? . . . a homeless person? . . . a baby yet to be born?*

THROUGH EVERYDAY CONVERSATIONS YOU CAN INSTILL A HEALTHY SPIRITUAL IDENTITY IN YOUR CHILDREN

DID I SAY THAT?

We love to tell our kids how special they are because God made them, but do our overheard comments send a different message about the value of life?

Betsy Powell, Program Director of Family and Community for Focus on the Family, offers the following advice:

What we say...

- “Did you hear that Megan is pregnant again? Doesn’t she know where babies come from?”
- “Wow, the Shermans’ teen daughter is pregnant! I suppose college is out of the picture now.”
- “I don’t care if it’s a boy or a girl, as long as it’s healthy.”

What our kids may hear...

- Babies are accidents to be avoided.
- Having a baby can ruin your life.
- People with special needs have less value.

Instead, let’s be intentional about communicating that every child is a blessing from God, not a burden:

- “Did you hear that Megan is pregnant again? That’ll be one more baby to love!”
- “The Shermans’ teen daughter is going to have a baby. I wonder how our family could help.”
- “I don’t care if it’s a boy or a girl. We’re just excited to see who God is sending to our family!” ■



TEEN YEARS (ages 13-18)

Knowledge + compassion = power to impact lives

Life is sacred. Your teens have heard this phrase over and over, and yet they may still question whether to voice their pro-life convictions to a friend considering abortion. They may also struggle with doubts about their own self-worth. Use the following discussions and resources to help your teens develop compassion and confidence.

YOU ARE WORTHY

“Who am I?” is a question that our culture answers daily for your teens through media messages, sports stars and peers. These influences shape your kids’ self-worth by measuring their beauty, talent and wealth against a cultural “standard.” Do your teens believe human dignity is inherent or earned? Are they struggling with the concept of respect—for themselves as well as for others?

Discuss the inherent worth and the sacredness of their lives with them:

- What does sacred mean?
- What gives your life value? (Read Genesis 1:27 together. Have your teens answer that question again.)
- If all human life is sacred and worthy of respect, how does that influence the way we treat kids who may not be “cool”?
- Why is everyone entitled to respect? Read Psalm 139:1-18 together, then have your teen answer that question again.
- How does respect affect family relationships?

- How can I better model respect in our relationship? What can I do to affirm your value? (Tell your teens they have inherent dignity and worth both to God and to you.)

REHEARSE THE MESSAGE: PREPARING TEENS TO BE A VOICE FOR LIFE

From a casual discussion about last night’s episode of “Teen Mom” to a friend seeking advice about a recently discovered pregnancy, most teens will encounter real-life opportunities to participate in the value-of-life debate.

Facilitate an ongoing, open dialogue with your teen to prepare her to confidently discuss this topic with others. Encourage her to ask questions if she is unsure of biblical truths, and share your own understanding of Scripture’s messages about the value of life.

As part of your dialogue, talk through the following scenarios from Christian counselors Shelby and Charles Hall, preparing your teen to respond with love and truth to people with different viewpoints, friends in crisis or someone needing to hear a message of forgiveness.

Your friend has learned that she is pregnant and is unsure what to do

- How do you think your friend might be feeling?



- How could you demonstrate compassion for your friend? How might you show her she can trust you?
- What types of resources could you share with your friend?
- Who might be able to assist your friend in making a rational decision rather than a rash, emotional choice?
- What help might a Christian counselor offer? How about a pregnancy resource center?
- Who could offer guidance if your friend is considering making an adoption plan?
- If you learn that your friend is seriously considering abortion, how could you share your beliefs about the value of life?
- Who might be able to educate your friend about the long-term emotional and physical effects of abortion?

Your friend wants to keep her pregnancy a secret from her parents and other adults

- What kind of support might a trusted adult be able to offer that peers cannot (examples: financial support for counseling services or medical bills, additional resources unknown to you, facilitating a conversation with your friend's family members, and so on)?
- Think about who the trusted adults in your life are. Does your friend have anyone in her life she could turn to? How could you encourage her to confide in these trusted adults?
- How might it be beneficial for your friend to talk with someone who also experienced an unexpected pregnancy and decided to parent the baby or make an adoption plan?
- How could you pray for your friend?

You Encounter Abortion Advocates at School or Among Friends

- How would you feel voicing beliefs that are different from your peers?

- What could you say if asked why you are pro-life?
- What could you say if someone says that abortion is not wrong because a fetus is not a human being? How do you know that a fetus is fully human? How could you respond to someone who says a woman's right to choose is more important than a fetus' right to live?
- Why might it be helpful to research pro-abortion arguments?
- How could you communicate a pro-life message without being angry or disrespectful?
- Has someone ever gotten angry at you or made fun of you for your pro-life beliefs? Let's role-play that situation—you be the other person and talk to me like they talked to you. I'll be the pro-lifer responding to them, then we'll brainstorm together how we can respond better the next time.

OFTEN, A YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS PREGNANT IS VERY AFRAID

For every young woman experiencing an unexpected pregnancy, there is also a young man who is greatly impacted by decisions made about the pregnancy. Talk with your teen boy about how he could respond in the following situations:

Your friend has learned that his girlfriend is pregnant, but decides it is not "his problem"

- Has your friend asked you for advice or did he simply mention the situation with his girlfriend in an offhand way? What influence might you have? What could you do for your friend (examples: talk to him, pray for him, look for opportunities to offer advice or help)?

- Do you or your friend know any young fathers who are doing well in family life? Why is it important for your friend to talk with others who have been through what he is going through? What things might he not have considered?
- How would you feel in your friend's situation? What might be driving your friend's response (examples: fear, uncertainty, feeling inconvenienced, irresponsibility)?
- In what ways might your friend be a great father? In what ways might he not be responsible enough to be a father? How might he have to prepare for fatherhood in the areas where he is irresponsible? If you were in his situation, how would your life have to change? Where would you need to be more responsible?
- If your friend chose to be involved in the pregnancy, who might be a support for him? What are some practical things you could do to support him?
- If your friend asked for advice, how could you talk about what impact an abortion might have on him? On his girlfriend? How can you encourage him to consider all the options before making a choice? Who could help facilitate the discussion between your friend and his girlfriend so they explore all of their options?
- If he is open to considering options, where could your friend go for information about making an adoption plan? What might be the impact of adoption on your friend? On his girlfriend? How could you encourage him to discuss with his girlfriend the possibility of making an adoption plan?

EDUCATE YOUR TEEN

We can prepare our teens to be advocates for preborn babies and pregnant moms by equipping them to offer accurate information, resources and hope to friends in crisis. Here are some websites that you may find helpful as you educate your teen about the consequences of abortion and the resources available to those experiencing an unexpected pregnancy.

BeAVoice.net

Find helpful resources like these:

- ***The Dignity of Human Life*** is a four-minute video that's a nonpolitical, biblically based explanation of what it means to be pro-life at every stage.
- ***The Sanctity Guide*** is a free, downloadable 73-page resource that will help you to see how the sanctity of human life applies to each stage of life.
- ***Free online booklets:*** In cooperation with the Physician Resource Council, Focus has developed a series of educational booklets in English and Spanish that it provides to pregnancy centers to offer medically accurate, life-affirming information to the women they serve. You can read these booklets online: just click on the link for Pregnancy Center Resources and you'll find PDFs of all our

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THE ABORTION ISSUE?

Your friend is pressuring his pregnant girlfriend to have an abortion

- Do you know what you believe about the abortion issue? Explain. If not, consider going through the following Scriptures together: Jeremiah 1:5, Galatians 1:15, Psalm 127:3, Psalm 139:15-16. Then, discuss what God is telling us about the life of a preborn child.
- What information sources does your friend trust (examples: TV, Internet, friends, parents)? What information available through the sources your friend trusts could you share with him? How might this help him think through his decision?

booklets. You can also purchase these booklets for just 50 cents each: visit ThrivingPastor.com/Bookstore

- Visit our Facebook page, [I Am Pro-Life](#), and be inspired about the value of life.

Find a Pregnancy Care Center Near You:
OptionLine.org

Pregnancy care centers and clinics provide services to women facing unexpected pregnancies as well as post-abortion healing resources and small groups. It's an easy way to find help for a friend.

Post-Abortion Help:
AbortionChangesYou.com

A safe place to begin a healing journey for those whose lives have been impacted by their own abortion choice or someone else's abortion. Your teen will find stories by others telling what led them to have an abortion and why they are now seeking healing.

Surrender the Secret Online Reality Show:
KnockTV.com/SurrenderTheSecret

This is a great website to recommend to a friend who regrets an abortion in her past and it will help your teen to understand how abortion can impact a woman's life. This is an innovative, confidential way to learn about God's grace and forgiveness: watch five women go through a 10-session Bible Study and find local help.

Thriving Family Magazine
ThrivingFamily.com

Search for helpful articles like these:

- *Who Am I?*
- *Life Is Sacred*
- *Facing the Truth*
- *Two and a Half Hours With Audrey*
- *Valuing the Elderly*

Recommended from the Daily Broadcast:
FocusOnTheFamily.com/Media/Daily_Broadcast

- *Reaching Hearts on Abortion I-II*
- *The Value of Standing for Life*
- *A Miraculous Story of Life I-II*
- *Leaving Planned Parenthood I-II*
- *Finding Forgiveness for My Abortion*
- *Fatherhood Lost: Abortion's Impact on Men*

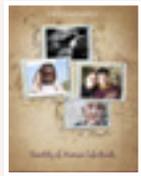
Recommended Books in the Online Store
Family.ChristianBook.com

- *Pro-Life Answers to Pro-Choice Arguments* by Randy Alcorn
- *Stand for Life* by John Ensor and Scott Klusendorf
- *Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of a Former Planned Parenthood Leader's Eye-Opening Journey Across the Life Line* by Abby Johnson
- *The Wonder Within You* by Carey Wickersham ■

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FAMILIES IN YOUR CHURCH

HELPING YOU BE A VOICE FOR LIFE



The Sanctity Guide

This free, downloadable 73-page guide will help you to see how the sanctity of human life applies to each stage of life, providing guidance for making life-affirming choices for yourself and your family. Download the PDF to have as a handy reference guide at BeAVoice.net



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SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE



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These booklets are just 50 cents each and can be ordered online at ThrivingPastor.com/Bookstore

Grants and Educational Resources for Pro-Life Pregnancy Centers and Maternity Homes

Learn more at Heartlink.org

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Benevolent Resources: Pregnancy centers and maternity homes can receive up to \$500 in educational resources each year to share with their clients.

Parenting Help: Free subscriptions to *Thriving Family™* magazine for your clients who choose to parent.

END NOTES

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COUNSELING LINE

FocusOnTheFamily.com/Counseling
COUNSELING REFERRAL NETWORK



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