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Sermon Notes

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The Sanctity of Human Life

Psalm 139:13-18; Luke 1:41-44

I. Another Year

Abortion is still the “law of the land”... it is true

BUT incredible progress has been made in one year’s time

First and foremost, 2003 finally saw the “Partial Birth Abortion Act”. On November 5, 2003 in the Ronald Reagan Building in Washington, D.C., President George W. Bush signed into law the “Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003,” making illegal that hideous practice of terminating the life of a child just inches from birth. He also determined to defend this law against any who would try to overturn it in the courts

Just minutes after President Bush signed the law, a Nebraska Federal Judge named Richard G. Kopf issued a temporary restraining order against prosecuting a doctor for performing this repulsive procedure in Nebraska. The battle goes on and on, and despite the fact that the overwhelming majority of Americans want concerning this practice, we are guaranteed by the ACLU and other pro-abortion groups that the road ahead will be long and difficult

We have also seen a marked change in the attitude of Americans as a whole in the matter of abortion... it is becoming more and more clear that the Pro-Life argument is carrying the day in the hearts and minds of the majority of Americans.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the legal schizophrenia which permits a pre-born child to be murdered if the mother doesn’t want the child, but which permits prosecutors to charge someone with murder if they kill a pre-born child she DOES want. Since when is it possible to say that a person is LEGALLY a PERSON if ANOTHER PERSON says so??

In California, national attention was focused on the Scott Peterson trial in which prosecutors were seeking to charge Peterson with two murders, one of his wife, and the other of their pre-born child. The California Supreme Court has consistently upheld the law that someone can be charged for murdering a pre-born child regardless of whether it was old enough to survive outside the womb!

A South Carolina woman named Regina McKnight was charged with “homicide by child abuse,” since her pre-born child was stillborn as a result of her cocaine addiction. In South Carolina, a

child is considered a person under the law from the third trimester on... however, South Carolina is not permitted to make any law banning abortion in the third trimester because of the infamous Roe vs. Wade decision of 1973.

D. The Church: The Pillar and Foundation of the Truth

1 Timothy 3:15 the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

II. Satan's Web of Lies

Illus. Involvement in Pro-Life Ministry in Brookline, MA... Satanic presence

John 8:44 When [the devil] lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

"Father of lies" means Satan's primary job is to overturn and destroy God's truth with lies

The church, wielding God's word, is the world's only hope!!

A. Three Great Lies Satan Tells Society

1. The Pre-born is not truly a human person
2. This child is a burden not a blessing
3. Abortion is beneficial for the mother

B. Two Great Lies Satan Tells the Church

1. Abortion is so entrenched as the law of the land, nothing you can do will change it
2. Simply changing the laws to make abortion illegal will completely solve this problem.

C. One Great Lie Satan Tells Guilty Individuals

1. Your sin in this matter is so great, nothing can make it right... there is no forgiveness possible

III. Dispelling the Lies with Pure Truth

A. Speaking Truth to Society

1. On the personhood of the pre-born

Satan's lie #1: The Pre-born is not truly a human person

Now... I could give ample evidence of the personhood of the unborn from **science**

- I could speak of the **genetic uniqueness** of the infant from the instant of conception
- I could speak of the **distinct blood type** of that baby, of its **beating heart** from the _____ week,
- Of its **fingerprints** from the _____ week
- Of its **thoughts, emotions, responses to stimulation...** growing every more complex as the child grows
- I could speak of the astonishing pictures of the new **GE Ultrasound equipment**

BUT RATHER... I want the authority of the sacredness of life within the womb to rest on its proper foundation: direct revelation from God! The BIBLE tells us the pre-born is a human person

a. evidence from Psalm 139

i) Context: The Omniscient, Omnipresent God in Intimate Personal Relationship with David

- Psalm 139: "You and Me, O God"... a meditation on the intensity of God's intimate relationship with David
- Verse after verse describe how intensely God has covered David with His thoughts and His presence
- Verse 13 begins with the word "For..." LOOK BACK at the first 12 verses

Psalm 139:1 O LORD, you have searched me and you know me.

2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

5 You hem me in-- behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

11 If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

12 even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

- Notice how totally and completely David feels "hemmed in" by God's omniscience and omnipresence
- Even David's actions in the dark are fully open and uncovered before the intense glare of God's perfect knowledge and constant presence

- Verses 13-16 show that this intense relationship began while God was knitting David together in His mother's womb... even at that point David was being formed to have a relationship with God
- Studies show that newborn infants can recognize their mother's voice! Why? Because they've been hearing it all along
- In like manner, David began His relationship with God inside His mother's womb

ii) key concept: God possessed David's "inmost being"

Psalm 139:13 For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

My KJV experience:

KJV Psalm 139:13 For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

- "reins" = "inmost being" = lit. kidneys!

In sacrificial passages, the kidneys are the physical literal organs from the bulls and goats

Exodus 29:13 Then take all the fat around the inner parts, the covering of the liver, and both kidneys with the fat on them, and burn them on the altar.

However, in poetical language, the word speaks of the mind... the seat of affections... that which God tests

Psalm 7:9 O righteous God, who searches minds and hearts

Psalm 16:7 I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

Proverbs 23:16 my inmost being will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.

So the reins are the part of us that instruct us at night, that rejoice in truth, that God searches and tests

It is this capacity that Job spoke of in his famous statement in Job 19

Job 19:25-27 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. 26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; 27 I myself will see him with my own eyes-- I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Job's "inmost being", his "heart" is what yearns to see His Redeemer

To sum up, this is what God created while David was still inside his mother's womb: a physical body, yes, but more... the capacity to yearn for and rejoice in God

- BUT MORE: the Hebrew word is not actually "create" but ***qanah***, which usually is translated "possess" or "acquire" or become the "owner"

In short... God "owned" or "possessed" David's inmost being while he was still inside his mother's womb

NOTE: This means the womb is off-limits to the invading abortionist... God owns our inmost being, for He formed it and made it

iii) God's intense personal activity on David inside the womb

vs. 14-16 *I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 15 My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, 16 your eyes saw my unformed body.*

vs. 15 "Woven together" = skillful weaving like the work of an expert embroiderer... it speaks of exquisitely crafted things, minutely detailed, perfectly constructed

Like the sash made for the high priest:

Exodus 39:29 *The sash was of finely twisted linen and blue, purple and scarlet yarn-- the work of an embroiderer-- as the LORD commanded Moses.*

To sum up... while still in his mother's womb, David was perfectly and exquisitely woven together

iv) why did God do all this? So David would love Him!!!

David given a mysterious capacity to yearn for and delight in God

Illus. Pascal: God-shaped vacuum... God crafts a place for Himself to fill, and He begins to prepare it while we are still inside our mother's wombs:

Psalm 22:9 *Yet you brought me out of the womb; you made me trust in you even at my mother's breast.*

Newborn infants can recognize their mother's voices... why not respond to God the creator??

From infancy, God crafts us and prepares us for faith

From the womb, we belong to HIM

b. evidence from Luke 1

Luke 1:41-44 *When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! 43 But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.*

- Two evidences of personhood of pre-born:
- 1) Elizabeth says that Mary is ALREADY the mother of her Lord, even though Jesus was only very recently conceived in her
- 2) John the Baptist leaped FOR JOY... only a person can do this!!

Luke 1:44 cannot be explained away... no "mass of cells" can leap for joy

Summary: the foundation of our truth to the world on abortion... the Bible clearly teaches that what is being formed in the womb is a human person, that the baby belongs to HIM and that we have no right to invade the womb and stop what God is weaving together

2. Speaking truth on the blessing of children

Satan's lie #2: This child is a burden not a blessing

- a. Satan's general goal: to cause us to hate children as much as he does
- b. Satan's specific goal in this pregnancy: to cause the parents to despise the child

Despise its personhood: it's an it, not a baby

Despise the effect the child will have on their life: financially, in lifestyle, in career, in plans

- c. same attitude continues on into actual parenthood

Abortion gives us the evil sense of ownership over children... as though they are ours to assess and decide over

Planned Parenthood's slogan: "Every child a wanted child"... supposedly reducing child abuse

Actually the opposite has happened!! Children are scorned and considered a burden, the natural affection of parents for their children is severed, children become a curse not the blessing God intended them to be

Child abuse in our selfish and angry age keeps rising, DESPITE the availability of abortion... can I say maybe BECAUSE OF abortion!!

Nowadays, even Christians think of children essentially negatively... how much money they cost to raise, how much of an interference they are on your plans, your career, your pleasures

The obvious selfishness of this must be exposed!!

BUT more positively, we are missing a blessing!!!!!!

- d. Biblical truth: every child is a blessing from God

NASB Psalm 127:3-5 Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

- e. Biblical truth #2: every child is to be born in the context of marriage where the physical, emotional, economic, relational and spiritual struggles of parenting can be shared by husband and wife

We cannot candy-coat the truth... extramarital sex is sin; if a baby is produced, the physical burdens will be greatly multiplied. Parenting is hard enough with two godly Spirit-filled Christian parents working together

YET EVEN STILL... the baby inside that woman is a special creation by God with an eternal soul... the baby is a blessing of greater worth than anyone can measure

- 3. Speaking truth on the damage of abortion to the mother

Satan's lie #3: Abortion is beneficial for the mother

- a. a greatly concealed factor: risk of severe physical damage to the mother
- b. more universally: risk of severe psychological damage... guilt, depression, repression

Isaiah 49:15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child And have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you."

Compassion of a mother for her children is deeply ingrained, totally natural

Women who get abortions must repress this motherly instinct and risk damaging themselves psychologically

Planned Parenthood "counselors" steadfastly refuse to call the baby a baby... refer to it as a "fetus" (Latin for "young one") or a "Product of Conception"

The personhood of the preborn is universally hidden from women seeking secular advice on what to do

- c. spiritually: seared conscience, guilt before God

Repeatedly ignoring pangs of conscience can lead to a seared conscience

1 Timothy 4:2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

Acts 24:16 So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

In short, abortion is incredibly damaging to women

Some of the greatest ministry the church must have is to women who have been physically, psychologically, and spiritually damaged by the lie of abortion

BUT: sadly, in some cases therapeutic abortions must be done to save the physical life of the mother... in those cases the baby would have died anyway along with the mother... only then can abortion be said to be beneficial to the mother... and even then, most women grieve deeply over the loss of life... and call the experience a tragedy from which God healed them

Thus... in three key ways we need to **speak truth to our society**:

- 1) The preborn is human from conception, a person who is capable of responding to God and who is God's own possession
- 2) Children are an incredible blessing from God, who are to be nurtured in the context of God-ordained marriage
- 3) Abortion is not healthy but damaging to the women who submit to the procedure: damaging physically, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually

B. Speaking Truth to the Church

1. Speaking truth about the feeling of lethargy and despair

Satan's lie #4: Abortion is too entrenched to overthrow... so give up!

- a. a tool of Satan to intimidate and silence the church
- b. Satan wants us to feel that nothing we do could possibly make a difference
- c. Satan knows better than we do the power of our offensive and defensive weaponry

Offensive:

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Defensive: Armor of God

Ephesians 6:11-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Satan knows that He cannot stand against the onslaught of truth coming from the army of Christian warriors fighting Him

Satan also knows that we CAN stand against him and his weapons when we are clothed with the full armor of God

So... all He can do is intimidate us into depression and inactivity!!

Number 13:31-33 But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, "The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. 33 We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

To encourage the people, God raised up two witnesses, Joshua and Caleb, to speak peace and power to the people in God's name:

Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it."

So I call upon two witnesses from the past to give us courage and show us the way

Illus.: William Wilberforce and William Lloyd Garrison

- Wilberforce: astounding picture of fearless, gentle persuasion and irresistible persuasion
 - ✓ The persistence of a marathoner:

Labored for twenty years to stop British slave trade... introduced bills again and again, and never stopped educating the public on evils of slave trade

An enemy: "It is necessary to watch him as he is blessed with a very sufficient quantity of that enthusiastic spirit, which so far from yielding that it grows more vigorous with blows."

Illus. He was like a cork which kept popping up again and again, and never grew weary in the battle

- ✓ Joyful winsomeness:

Illus. Joyful marathoner, not a sprinter

July 26, 1833, twenty-seven years later, three days before Wilberforce died, slavery itself was abolished

August 5, 1833, at his funeral procession to Westminster Abbey, his American counterpart, William Lloyd Garrison followed

- Garrison: fearless, fiery preacher of righteousness through journalism

For decades of unremitting labor, Garrison and his paper *The Liberator* hammered away at the conscience of America with fiery zeal and truth that could not be resisted

Garrison: **"I need to be all on fire, for I am surrounded by mountains of ice!"**

Most famous declaration on abolition: **"I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—and I will be heard!!!"**

Be encouraged: these brothers in the Lord stood against just as great forces in their day and they prevailed... after decades of unremitting struggle

So can we!!!

2. On simply changing the laws

Satan's lie #5: Abortion will be defeated if we merely change the laws

- a. abortion rights have marinated the minds of a full generation and more of people
- b. we must see minds and hearts changed

Illus. "Operation Rescue" vs. "Operation Reschedule"

c. also, abortion done for a huge variety of reasons

- Economic reasons: too poor to raise another child
- Family reasons: bad family situation, abusive husbands, non-supportive parents, etc.
- Spiritual reasons: no convictions whatsoever in the matter; selfishness; ignorance
- Philosophical reasons: dislike of children... seen to be an interruption in lifestyle

Church MUST answer and transform each of these to be truly effective

YET: change of law will have a huge effect!!! Laws represent collective conviction of morality

C. Speaking Truth to Hurting People

Satan's lie #6: Your sin is too great for God to forgive!

1. Satan's lie to guilty sinners

Your sin in this matter is so great, nothing can make it right... there is no forgiveness possible

2. Satan's viciousness: to lure into sin, to accuse you of it

3. Satan's goal: despair, hopelessness, destruction

The Spirit of Abortion is essentially anti-grace and hopeless!!!

- It says to the **abortionist doctor**, "There so much blood on your hands God can never accept you... your soul is lost forever!"
- It says to the **pregnant woman** with a child conceived out of wedlock, "You're pregnant through sin, and God has abandoned you. There can be no forgiveness for you... you might as well abort that baby!"
- It says to the **woman who already had an abortion**, "You have killed your own baby, and now God will reject you forever... there can be no mercy or grace for you!"
- It says to the **man who abdicated his responsibility to the child he fathered**, who pushed the mother of his child to get an abortion so he won't have to face his responsibilities to provide for, protect and nurture both the mother and child, "You are a failure as a man, you have pushed someone to murder... you have committed an unpardonable sin!"
- It says to the **pastor** who has neglected personal involvement in the abortion issue because of fear or desire for a placid life, "God will not forgive you... you are a hypocrite and a coward."
- It says to the **politician** who has hardened his heart and seared his conscience by advocating a 'woman's right to choose' in order to get elected to the office he coveted, "You cannot be forgiven... God's grace cannot cover your sin!"
- It says to the **Supreme Court justice** who wrote the decisions that legalized or protected abortion in America, "Your sin is so immense and your responsibility for millions so crushing, there can be no grace for you... ever!"

These are the lies of the devil... the sin in every case is genuine; but Satan uses and accuses, to force hopelessness and despair

The last thing he wants is sinners to become broken-hearted unto repentance, to find in the blood of Christ the cleansing and forgiveness that God alone can give

4. God's Remedy: THE TRUTH!!!

- a. True Preaching: "Disturbing the comfortable and comforting the disturbed"
 - i). If you are comfortable with abortion, I want to disturb you deeply!!!
 - ii). BUT if you are already disturbed, deeply hurt, guilt-ridden and broken-hearted, I want to point you to the only true healer, Jesus Christ... and the only healing fountain: the blood of Christ on the Cross
- b. the truth about CHRIST

Christ can and will forgive any sin confessed to Him from a truly broken and repentant heart

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Christ's blood is sufficient to cover a mountain of sin!!

Ephesians 1:7 In [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

Romans 5:20 where sin increased, grace increased all the more

Come to Christ today!! Admit that you need His forgiveness, and turn away from sin... He is gracious and will forgive

Matthew 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

V. Application

1. Believe the Bible: The Pre-born are persons!!!

Resolve forever in your heart the personhood of the pre-born

Luke 1:44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

2. Reason and Persuade: Win Hearts and Minds!!

Reason logically from that prior conviction... and make the case to America!!

- a. abortion in the case of rape & incest makes as much sense as infanticide in the case of rape and incest

Should every child born as a result of rape or incest be killed if the mother says so?

Neither should any pre-born child conceived as a result of rape or incest!

- b. slogans such as **"Let's make abortion safe, legal, funded and rare"** are just politician's double-speak... if the pre-born is not human, then why should abortions be made rare? If the pre-born is human, then why should abortions be legal?
- c. All laws that permit abortion except to save the physical life of the mother are intrinsically unjust and evil

Bring that kind of case to your neighbors and co-workers... be willing to be persecuted for righteousness' sake

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

3. Persevere in Prayer and Action to Abolish Abortion:

- Let us be “All on fire”, like William Lloyd Garrison was in the abolition movement
- Let us be joyfully, confidently persevering, like William Wilberforce was over forty years
- Begin with a commitment to pray every day about the abortion issue
- Don't give up when the going gets tough... Satan will not release this matter easily

4. Radiate Hope: Shine as a beacon of hope, grace, and faith for the desperate

- Realize how hopeless and faithless is the spirit of abortion
- In many counseling situations, women are tempted to choose abortion because of hopelessness about the future
- Despite the “pro-choice” rhetoric, they frequently speak of having “No choice”
- It is for Christians to speak a message of faith and hope into the darkest night they have ever experienced
- God's grace is sufficient to meet every need they will ever face, if only they will trust Christ

5. Enlist in God's Army: Offer your gifts and resources to pro-life causes

Pregnancy Support Services needs any level of financial support you can give

They also need any amount of time you can offer

If you are politically or legally minded, pray about getting involved at that level

6. COME TO CHRIST

Perhaps you have never trusted Christ as Lord and Savior... the blood He shed on the cross is sufficient to atone for the sin of abortion and to bring you to complete forgiveness and healing

1 John 1:7-9 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

If as a Christian you have lingering guilt over a past sin, realize that any sin we confess and renounce is totally forgiven, thrown in the depths of the sea

Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.