

"Sanctity of Human Life Sunday: Choose Life"
Deut. 30:19 and Selected Texts
January 22, 2017

Turn in your Bibles to Deuteronomy 30:19. The title of the message is "Choose Life." Deuteronomy 30:19 says: "This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live." Prayer.

Introduction: As a nation, we must come to grips with the option and opportunity in Deuteronomy 30:19. God has set before us the option of life and death and the opportunity to choose life. Tragically, as a culture, we have chosen death. Did you know that 3,000 innocent people will be murdered in America tomorrow? These individuals have had no trial, no legal representation, and no opportunity to defend themselves. Yet, they have been executed in a cruel, inhumane way.

In fact, we can predict these horrible deaths with chilling accuracy. One human life will be destroyed every 20 seconds. When added up, that's around 1 million Americans a year. Over the past 44 years, some 59 million have been murdered without mercy in these United States. Mark down January 22, 1973 as a date that will also live in infamy. For on that date, the United States Supreme Court made it legal¹ for our nation to murder human beings by what doctors call an abortion.²

Let the weight of that hit you: 59 million lives...gone. Just think of a catastrophic disaster where the entire populations of California, Arizona, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington are wiped out. That is what we are talking about. Abortion is the American Holocaust, and it is a moral outrage that ought to make every Christian in this nation rise up in righteous indignation. So what I want to do this morning is to expose the deceptive arguments of the pro-abortion crowd, and then show you the declared truth of the word of God regarding preborn human life, and finally give you some definite things you can do about this moral madness called abortion, this war on human life.

I. DECEPTIVE ARGUMENTS OF THE PRO-ABORTIONISTS

First of all, let's talk about the Deceptive Arguments used by the pro-abortion crowd. Let's be honest, the abortionists, who like to be called pro-choice, have a lot of persuasive-sounding arguments they use to shout down their opponents. Maybe some of you have been deceived by these arguments, but want you to listen closely to some of them, and see if they really are all that sound when we subject them to scrutiny.

A. Argument # 1-Fetus is not a Baby: For example, there are some who say: "That's not really a baby while its in the womb." Folks, there's a Hebrew word for that, and it is "Hogwash." That's foolishness. A number of years ago a group of 60 prominent physicians, which included former presidents of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Academy of Neurology, met in Cambridge, MA and presented a declaration that said: "The fetus is not a sub-human species...the embryo is alive, human, and unique in the special environmental support required for that stage of human development."³ The bottom line: The biological facts are absolutely conclusive that the fetus is a living human being.

One big debate is about federal dollars being spent for stem cell research. The argument is that stem cells may hold the answer to some of life's most debilitating diseases. You've heard Christopher Reeves before he died, Ron Reagan the former president's son, Michael J. Fox, and politicians from both parties argue that the government needs to fund embryonic stem cell research. Then President Obama decreed it so by Executive Order, overturning the restrictions placed on it by the previous administration. Now I think it is great when scientific and medical advances can bring help and healing to people, and I agree that stem cells show tremendous potential to bring hope to people with conditions that up until now have been

hopeless.

However, the moral question we need to ask is this: Should we harvest human eggs and sperm and create and grow human embryos in the lab for the purpose of cultivating stem cells, and then discard those embryos, taking a nascent human life? Should we create a life only to be destroyed in the name of trying to help give extended life? Well President Obama and a majority in Congress have said "Yes!" Here's the problem: embryonic stem cell research has yielded no treatments, only tumors.

On the other hand, adult stem cells from fatty tissue, umbilical cords, and other sources, have been used in nearly 100 treatments with varying degrees of success. Embryonic stem cells have had zero treatments with success – even though billions have been spent worldwide and our tax dollars are being used here in America. But even more important than the practical and the financial perspective is the ethical perspective because when you strip the embryo of its stem cells, you destroy that human embryo, and that means you destroy a human life. No human life should ever be produced or destroyed for the benefit of another through stem cell research, cloning, or any other scientific research.

Yet many are deceived by the terminology used by scientists to refer to the human life created in the lab and by the abortionists to refer to the baby in the mother's womb. They talk about embryos, products of conception, and fetuses. Take the word "fetus" for example. That's a perfectly good Latin word meaning "preborn baby." But it is a Latin word. In the middle ages, Catholic priests read from the Latin version of the Bible and few could understand it. Then Martin Luther in Germany and John Wycliffe in England came along and translated the Latin Scriptures into the language of the people so that their people would have understanding. But the abortionists know how important it is to translate the English words into Latin, so that you won't know what is going on. It's all a part of their great deception.

And then there are those who would agree that it may be a living human being, but it doesn't have personhood and therefore human rights until the birth takes place. That in the womb, it is not a person. That hair-splitting argument brings up some interesting parallels in history. It reminds me of the Dred Scott case of 1857, when the Supreme Court said that the black man was not protected by the Constitution because a slave was not a person.⁴

It reminds me of Nazi Germany where Hitler and his regime said that the Jew was not a person. The Nazi's were shrewd enough to know that before you can enslave and exterminate human beings, the first thing you have to do is depersonalize and dehumanize them, *semantically* destroy them before you *physically* destroy them. Make them into something less than human. So that's a dangerous argument to say that the preborn creature in the womb is not human. It leads down a slippery slope where virtually all human life becomes worthless--we're speeding down that slope right now. Since we have allowed abortion, now the door is open to physician assisted suicide, which a number of state legislatures have passed and others are considering. We need to stop this slide and stand for life!

B. What about Rape and Incest and saving the life of the mother?: When you add up abortions due to rape and incest, and those to save the life of the mother, all three account for less than 4 percent of all abortions - 4 percent.⁵ But these three account for about 96 percent of the pro-abortionist's rhetoric. Fine, let's cut out the other 96 percent of the abortions and we'll talk about these instances, Amen? But no one would dispute that sometimes an abortion is necessary to save the life of the mother. If a choice must be made between the preborn child and the mother, then indeed the mother's life may be chosen because of first domain. She was here first. So aborting the baby to save the life of the mother is the lesser of two evils. No one would dispute that.

But there is a great deal of emotion attached to victims of rape and incest, and rightly so. But are you going to play God in a matter like this? Are you going to say that a baby conceived by rape or incest

should not live? Wouldn't that be following a wrong with another wrong? Let's say a white man raped a 13 year old African American girl, impregnating her. Should her parents force her to abort that child? If they had, we would not have been blessed by the Gospel Singer Ethel Watters, conceived by rape. And what about Ruth, a woman who has a book of the Bible named after her, and who is named in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ? She descended from a man named Moab, who was born out of an incestuous relationship. Who wants to play God?

C. Argument # 3: What About Handicaps and Birth Defects?: Let's say that there's a mother who has tuberculosis, she has already given birth to four children, one died, one is blind, one is deaf, and a fourth contracted tuberculosis from the mother. She's pregnant again, should she abort? Well if she had, then the world would have been robbed of the music of Ludwig von Beethoven. Are you going to play God? I mean follow the abortionist's argument to its logical conclusion. Do you believe that defective people should be put to death? Then a lot of us here ought not be alive, including the one who is speaking. All of us have defects. Just how perfect do you have to be in order to live? Where do we start when we eliminate those who are defective? Where do we end? Nazi Germany, abortion preceded killing of handicapped, elderly, and finally the Jews and other so-called "undesirables." We've started, where do we end?

But when you add up all the abortions in the case of rape, incest, saving the life of the mother, and the cases of deformity and handicaps, that's only about 7% of all abortions.⁶ What about the other 93%? Well the abortionists try to tell us that abortion laws are primarily for the overburdened and the under aged. Let's say a preacher and his wife are very poor and they have 14 kids already, then she learns that another baby is on the way. Considering the burden it would add to their family, should she abort? If she had, she would have aborted John Wesley, the great 19th century evangelist. Or what about a teenage girl who discovers she's pregnant out of wedlock. And the guy she's engaged to is not the father, he finds out, gets really upset, and threatens to call the whole thing off. Should she go ahead and get an abortion? If she had, she would have aborted *Jesus*.

Well most women who get abortions don't fit the description. Most are not overburdened or unwed teens. Two-thirds of the women who abort their babies are over 20, white, and middle class. And more than 40 percent of all abortions are performed on patients for the second, third, or fourth time around. But 76% of women who abort their babies are unmarried, and 53% have no other children. So we're not necessarily talking about teenage girls who got pregnant. We're not talking only about poverty stricken women who can't afford a baby. Most of these women have participated in illicit sex and are using abortion as a means of birth control or they are professionals who don't want their lives interrupted by children. The statistics don't lie. Consider this statistic: Fully 22% of all pregnancies are terminated by abortion, not counting miscarriages. That makes the womb the most dangerous place for an American – more dangerous than a citizen of Chicago or for one of our Special Forces personnel in ISIS held territory in Syria and Iraq.⁷

D. Argument # 4: Doesn't a Woman have the Right to Choose?: Doesn't a woman have the right to do what she pleases with her own body? No, not according to the law. In most states, it's illegal for a woman to be a prostitute, it is illegal to fill her body with illicit drugs, it is illegal to get intoxicated with alcohol and drive. No, a woman can't do entirely as she wishes. But the argument to end all arguments from the pro-abortion crowd is this: A woman has the right to choose. Choose what? Choose to steal? Choose to kidnap? Choose to murder? No. In a civilized society, a person does not have the right to do as they please in every case.

And that's especially true with regard to the preborn child in the mother's womb because we're not talking about her body, but a distinctly different person that should be granted full human rights, beginning with life. The same 60 physicians quoted earlier had this to say:

"A human ovum together with a human sperm produces a biologically identifiable human embryo. It has separate and unique genetic information and biological material. Every cell in a woman's body has exactly the same 46 chromosomes, and exactly the same genes. Every cell is identical in that way, except for the cells in that baby. The baby has a different set of chromosomes and a different set of genes."⁸

Listen, the baby even provides its own nest, the placenta and the umbilical cord. The baby has its own blood stream, maybe even a different blood type than the mother. In half of the cases, the baby has a different gender.⁹ So we're talking about a guest, a baby, living inside the host, the mother. Run that line of reasoning on out. Let's say a cult member comes into my home to share his heretical propaganda. He is an unwanted guest from the standpoint of his religion. Do I have the right to murder an unwanted guest? Same faulty reasoning with abortion.

II. DECLARED TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE

Well, we've heard their deceptive arguments and they don't hold water. But what is the declared truth of Scripture? We claim to accept the Bible as the word of God and therefore the final word. Do you agree? If you are a Christian it ought to be. And there are over 100 texts that deal with the preborn.

A. Preborn Human Life in the Old Testament: Look with me at Psalm 139:13-16. These verses tell us that God forms that child in a mother's womb, and that child is the subject and object of God's love and concern. Look at the pronouns. This is not an "it," a "thing" that can be removed like a tumor and destroyed. This is a person made in the image of God. And the Bible doesn't distinguish between prenatal and postnatal life. Look at Jeremiah 1:5. Jeremiah was a prophet and God told him: "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born I set you apart (KJV - consecrated)." You don't consecrate a gall bladder to become a prophet, you consecrate a person.

B. Preborn Human Life in the New Testament: In Luke's Gospel, we read that Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, went to visit her relative Elizabeth, who was pregnant with John the Baptist. Listen to v 41: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit." I mean, you never heard an expectant mother say: "A fetus leaped inside me or a product of conception kicked me." No. In fact, the Greek word *brephos* is used when it says that the baby leaped in her womb. That word can mean: "a preborn child, embryo, fetus, a new born child, an infant, a babe." It is the same term that is used to describe Jesus, the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (Luke 2:12, 16). In other words, there is no distinction made in the Greek NT between a preborn baby and a new born child. No distinction. And Greek is an expressive and precise language—there are 4 words that are used to describe love! But when it comes to describing a preborn child or a newborn child—there is only one term used. A preborn child is therefore not an "it," a preborn child is a person.

Let me ask you, if a mother delivered the child and then decided to kill the baby, would that be OK? What about the Lincoln Memorial University student who received national attention several years ago because she delivered her baby, ripped the umbilical cord loose, wrapped the child in a sweatshirt, and threw the unwanted child in the trash? She went to jail. But she wouldn't have if she had simply gotten an abortion. There's no difference between what she did and an abortion, because terminating a pregnancy is, in fact, taking a human life.

Do you know how an abortion is performed? It is ironic that the media will never allow you to see one. They will show us some of the 6 million victims of the Nazi Holocaust, they will show us abuses in Afghanistan, but none of the 57 million victims of the American Holocaust. They will bring the evils of slavery and the horrors of war into your home night after night, but not the preborn being aborted or the body parts of aborted babies. Why? Because as supporters of abortion rights, they know that if the light

ever shined in that darkness, there would be such a righteous outcry that abortion would be stopped.

Well what happens in an abortion? Some abortion doctors inject the womb with a saline solution that burns the baby alive. Other abortion doctors use a vacuum device that dismembers and sucks the preborn baby's body parts out of the womb. Others use forceps, which the baby struggles to avoid, according to the sonograms. They rip off the limbs, crush the baby's head, pull the body out of the womb, and throw it in the trash! Thank God Partial Birth Abortion has been stopped, but the other methods are no less inhumane and grisly. I mean, we would expect that in the death camps of Auschwitz, not the health clinics of America. Consequently....

C. Preborn Human Life Must Be Protected: Prov. 24:11-12 says: "Rescue those being led away to death, hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say: "We knew nothing about this." Does not He who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not He who guards your life know it? Will He not repay each person according to what he has done?" Folks, we need to stand up and speak out. Why? Because abortion is wrong! It is pre-meditated murder! It violates the 6th Commandment in Exodus 20:13: "You shall not murder."¹⁰ And I want you to know that God hates it. Proverbs 6:16-17--"There are six things that the Lord hates, seven are an abomination to Him: a proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood." God hates the shedding of innocent blood! And His ears are filled with the cries of the innocent being slain in this nation, and friend there will be a day of reckoning! And we will answer for what we do and for what we don't do!

III. DEFINITE ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE

We've talked about the Deceptive Arguments, the Declared Truth of Scripture, but lastly, lets explore some Definite Actions we can take. What should we do, what can we do, what must we do about this great evil of our day?

A. Be Informed: First, we need to be informed, and that's why I preached this message. Keep up with what is happening in our government by visiting www.frc.org and signing up for the Washington Update. The daily update only takes a few minutes to read, but it has clear, concise analysis of the threats to human life, traditional marriage, religious freedom and other issues that Bible-Believing Americans should be concerned about.

We need to inform others. We need to teach and preach and practice sexual purity at home and in the church so that our young people don't even get in a position to have to make such a choice between life and death. But if they do get it that position, encourage your kids, your grandkids, to choose life. Choose life. And when there is a moral failure, especially among our own, secondly, we need to...

B. Be Compassionate: We need to show compassion on the unwed mother, not condoning the sin, but caring for the sinner, leading both parties to repentance and restoration. Here's my firm conviction: Christians should be just as concerned and compassionate before the pregnancy and after the pregnancy as we are during the pregnancy. We need to support the creation and operation of Pregnancy Resource Centers as they help these young women choose life and then seek to give their children a life. We need to support adoption and foster care in our church because every child deserves a loving home with a dad and a mom. We need to get behind ethical stem cell research, which is leading to positive treatments and giving hope.

C. Be Active: Third, we need to be active. Jesus commanded: "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22:21). So a practical application for a Christian who is a citizen of America is to participate in the public debate and seek to have a positive "Salt and Light" influence on the direction of our government and its policies and laws. Here are some 5 practical

ways we can be active and make an impact:

- 1. Pray** – Pray that the dignity of every human life will be respected and protected at every age and stage of life from conception to natural death (Prov. 24:11-12). Visit prolifeapp.com for a “Prayer App.”
- 2. Affirm** newly elected President Trump for his pledge to only appoint Pro-Life Justices and Judges to the Courts: www.whitehouse.gov/contact.
- 3. Contact** your Representative and Senators by calling the U.S. Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121, or visit www.FRC.org and click on “More” tab, then “Contact Officials.” Urge them to support pro-life legislation:
 - A budget reconciliation bill that defunds Planned Parenthood and eliminates the abortion subsidies in Obamacare.
 - The *No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act*, sponsored by Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS), to permanently codify the annual appropriations rider known as the “Hyde Amendment,” to prohibit the funding for elective abortion and apply it to all federal agencies. FRC found that President Obama’s claim that Obamacare did not subsidize abortion in the health plans is untrue. Results of FRC’s research can be found at www.ObamacareAbortion.com.
 - The *Preborn Child Pain Capable Protection Act*, sponsored by Rep. Trent Franks (R-NJ) and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC), to ban abortion at 20 weeks, when preborn babies can experience severe pain.
- 4. Educate** yourself on pro-life arguments. Read the best arguments from science, the law, and women’s rights to advance the pro-life case against abortion to your friends, family and neighbors. To find out more about how to promote the pro-life cause in your daily life, check out www.FRC.org/life.
- 5. Support** a Pregnancy Care Center in your area. To find out a life-affirming ministry to women in your area who are expecting a child, check out <https://www.heartbeatinternational.org/worldwide-directory>.

Our efforts are making a difference. Be encouraged by the fact that the Pro-Life movement has made significant progress since January 22, 1973 when the Supreme Court legalized abortion. Congress overwhelmingly voted to do away with partial birth abortions, President Bush signed the ban into law, liberal judges blocked it as “unconstitutional,” but then the Supreme Court upheld the ban against Partial Birth abortion as constitutional. Pro-life legislation is being passed in state legislatures. And public opinion on abortion has shifted. Young people ages 18-29 are the most pro-life in our population. So at least the culture of death is being rolled back bit by bit, and that is encouraging.

But we still have a long way to go. Remember, elections have consequences. President Bush placed Samuel Alito and John Roberts on the Supreme Court and they made a difference. Unfortunately, President Obama placed Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan on the Court, and they will rule the wrong way on abortion and other life-science issues. Now President Trump will have an opportunity to make good on his promise to place pro-life Justices and Judges on the courts. Let’s hold him to it.

Bible-believing Christians need to be active because we can make a difference in who is making those life and death decisions by the way we vote and by our activism. Thomas Jefferson declared: “The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government.”¹¹ Let’s remind our public servants of that great truth of the need for government to protect the dignity of every human being, born and preborn. Listen, God’s people need to rise up and stand up and speak up for the defenseless! In fact, the Bible gives us our marching orders in Isaiah 58:1: “Shout it aloud! Don’t hold back! Raise your voice like a trumpet! Declare to my people their rebellion, and to the house of Jacob their sins.” We need to be that voice for those who have no voice.

Again, we need to fall on our knees and pray to Almighty God that He will change the direction of this nation that has launched out into a sea of innocent blood. We once held to the God-given right to life in this nation, but that day has gone and the night has come. But friend, our nation is not past saving. Nothing is impossible with God. Pray that even as slavery ended in America, even as the Jewish Holocaust ended, that the American Holocaust might end, that the murder of the innocent preborns might end, and that by the grace of God and our repentance, that this dark night on the soul of our nation might end and that the light of the Gospel might once again shine brightly in our land.

Prayer: Oh God, we pray for your mercy. Our nation deserves to be destroyed for because of abortion alone, even if we had no other sins. Have mercy on us as a people. We pray for those who have had abortions and for all those who have had a hand in them. We pray that you would lead them to the cross and help them look up to Him whose hands and feet were pierced that their sins might be paid for. Give us the courage to have a voice for those who have no voice, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Invitation: When the Bible says to choose life, that not only applies to the preborn children, that applies mainly to those who need to be born again. Some of you can choose life this morning by choosing to trust Jesus as Savior and follow Him as Lord. Others are deeply troubled about what you've just heard, and I hope that it troubles you into taking action. Some might say: "The action I'm going to take is walk out and never come back." I'm sorry you feel that way, but I've counted the costs, and I realize there's a price to pay for preaching the truth.

But I'm also aware that there may be others who would say: "I want to take a stand with a church like that. I want to be a part of a church that preaches and practices the truth of Scripture." Maybe God wants you to make this your church home, to join hands with us to reach people for Jesus, to stand for what's right, and to stand up for these innocent babes who can't stand for themselves. Maybe that's what God wants you to do this morning. Others may want to come and pray for our nation that is literally drowning in a sea of innocent blood that God would continue to show us mercy, and that He would enable us to turn the tide against this great evil of our time. You come as God leads you, while we sing.

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¹ Roe v. Wade, 410 U.S.; 113, 163-164 (1973).

² "Abortion in the United States: Statistics and Trends," National Right to Life, Internet, <http://nrlc.org/abortion/facts/abortionstats.html>.

³ See http://www.forerunner.com/forerunner/X0717_Abortion__Evolution.html.

⁴ Dred Scott v. Sandford, 60 U.S. 393 (1857)

⁵ See the stats provided by the Alan Guttmacher Institute: http://www.agi-usa.org/presentations/abort_slides.pdf

⁶ See <http://www.nrlc.org/abortion/facts/abortionstats2.html>. Statistics can be found at: http://www.agi-usa.org/presentations/abort_slides.pdf.

⁷ See the stats provided by the Alan Guttmacher Institute: http://www.agi-usa.org/presentations/abort_slides.pdf

⁸ See http://www.forerunner.com/forerunner/X0717_Abortion__Evolution.html.

⁹ C. Everett Koop, M.D., *Koop: The Memoirs of America's Family Doctor* (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 264, comments: "It always seemed clear to me that life begins at conception. After the twenty-three chromosomes of the sperm are united with the twenty-three chromosomes of the egg to become a one-celled living organism containing the entire genetic code that will eventually become a you or a me, that single cell requires nothing except nutrition to become a baby nine months later. Biologists seem to have no trouble believing that life begins at the time of fertilization when they talk about lizards, doves, or baboons; it is only when the argument turns to the highest form of animal life, a human being, that there enters a lot of fuzzy thinking about conception and life."

¹⁰ When God set forth the final five of the 10 Commandments to protect people's rights and preserve order in society, the first one is a prohibition against taking someone's life. In fact, the high value God places on human life is the justification for Capital Punishment. See Genesis 9:6, which says: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed for in the image of God has God made man." When you murder another person, you have committed a great evil. Why? Because God created man in His image, and your malicious attack against another human being is considered an indirect attack on God Himself. And that crime is worthy of the death penalty. Rom. 13 in the NT talks about the fact that God has ordained government to carry out that penalty-the authority "does

not bear the sword for nothing-He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer." Human life is precious in God's sight, the object of his great love. Anyone who takes a life wrongfully, is the object of God's wrath. See also Exod. 21:12-17, 22-23, 29.

¹¹Thomas Jefferson to Maryland Republicans, 1809. as found in Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh, eds., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 20 vols., (Washington, D.C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1903-1904), 16:359.