

EVIDENCE OF SANCTITY OF LIFE IN SCRIPTURE

Why Abortion Is a Church Issue

Abortion is more a moral issue than a political issue. It is a spiritual issue that has been politicized. The sanctity of life transcends partisan politics.

Scripture provides substantial direction for sanctity of life. The Bible teaches two foundational principals: life is valuable and life begins at conception.

Imago Dei (Latin for "image of God") provides the unshakable foundation for human dignity. In Genesis 1:26 God says, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." We are God's craftsmanship. Each person has this dignity from the moment of conception.

Human dignity is elevated further by the Incarnation, God Himself becoming man. And the Bible tells us the life of Jesus Christ did not begin when He was born, but when He was conceived. Mary "was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 1:18). Furthermore, Genesis teaches that the child in the womb is truly a human child, who even has a relationship with the Lord. The phrase "conceived and bore" is used repeatedly (Genesis 4:1,17).¹

Responding to abortion is a gospel issue

This is a "loving your neighbor as yourself" issue. *The gospel compels us to love innocent children and guilty adults.* It binds us to our fellow person. Abortion kills innocent children and leaves women and men in shame and guilt. The gospel compels us to defend innocent children, and it provides forgiveness and hope for guilty adults. Faithful churches do not hide such hope.²

Defending innocent children

The Church's refusal to speak up for "the least of these" has become our great scandal. It is not just the child, the mother and father, and the abortionist who are dehumanized by abortion. Christians who are indifferent to the plight of the preborn are dehumanized as well. A failure to advocate for children, within our own congregations, threatened by abortion is amputating our spirit and disfiguring the soul of the Church. Not speaking about this damages our gospel witness. We have children missing from every one of our churches. They're missing because they have been aborted *with the silent blessing of their own church.* How will we ever see an end to abortion everywhere if we can't even protect the children in our churches?²

Forgiveness and hope

There is no sin, including abortion, that is so great that God's grace is not greater still. Ministering to those who have had an abortion should be a pastoral concern for every church leader. Speaking against abortion does not turn people away from the gospel: it invites them to embrace it. Exposing sin brings to mind the need for a savior. Talking about it can open the door to healing. "Speak the truth in love." The gospel is good news. Abortion is no match for the grace of God. Jesus promises not just to forgive, but to restore.² This is not a message to hide from those who have been wounded.

Is the gospel for everyone? Or is it only for those who are conveniently loved and protected? "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute" (*Proverbs 31:8*).

PASTOR
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Character of Our Congregations

Christians have abortions at alarming rates.

When you speak about abortion from the pulpit, always remember that many people listening may have had an abortion or be close to someone who has. Speak the truth with compassion.

Sing a Little Louder.

A man living in Germany during the Nazi Holocaust recounts his experience of attending a church which a train passed regularly carrying captive Jews to concentration camps. Each time the train passed, the congregation decided to sing hymns in order to keep from being so disturbed by the Jews' cries.

"By the time the train came rumbling past the church yard, we were singing at the top of our voices. If some of the screams reached our ears, we'd just sing a little louder until we could hear them no more. ... I can still hear them crying out for help. God forgive all of us who called ourselves Christians yet did nothing to intervene."

Our nation faces a new holocaust in the age of abortion, and our churches must refuse to be silent. We are obligated to live out the Christian faith in practice by praying and acting on behalf of the vulnerable unborn.