

Israel to go forward!” Don’t stand there wringing your hands and talking about it. It’s time to act! It’s time to press forward! It’s time to be positive! It’s time to do the right thing!

There is an old saying that goes, “There’s a time to fish and a there’s a time to cut bait.” At the Red Sea, the time for cutting bait was past! Similarly, when we are tempted to go back to our old lives of sin, sorrow, bondage, and misery we shouldn’t look back on it with fondness. We need to recognize and remember how miserable it was. Instead we must act! We must “go forward”! We must not look back on our own personal Egypt with longing eyes, but “press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:14). Going back to Egypt should never be an option!

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” (Rom. 13:14)

Think!

Abortionists claim abortion is “settled law” because of *Roe v. Wade*; hence, it is “legal.” Once upon a time it was “legal” to sell human beings on the auction block in America. Legality does not turn an immoral act into a moral act. —Craig Thomas

News & Notes

- Please pray for the Dickey family who are members at Belleville. Andy Dickey was tragically killed in an accident (9/7/20) and his wife (Courtney) suffered a heart attack the following day. Sherry and I have known the Dickey family for many years.
- Please keep sister Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. She’s an encouragement to all!
- Pray for all our members who do not attend regularly. Try to encourage them!
- Pray for the African appeal for funds to buy Bibles, songbooks and support faithful preachers’ travel expense. Donate if you’re able! 1 Jn. 3:17
- Please pray for Marcia Wilson, Wilma’s daughter. She recently had gall bladder surgery. Also, please pray for Lana May. She is struggling with kidney stones.
- Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.
- Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.
- There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?!
- Anyone need prayers? Let us know so we can announce it and post it.

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Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

John 6:68



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Social Issues (Part 1): Abortion

Abortion is the procedure through which the life of a child in the womb is deliberately terminated. In other words, when an abortion is performed, an unborn child (a human being) is intentionally killed.

Those who argue in favor of abortion defend the practice as a woman’s “right to choose” (yet in most cases, it is really about avoiding the consequences of other choices). They contend that arguments or legislation against abortion are hostile toward women as they are to have a right to privacy (yet privacy should not be used to justify sin). They declare that they have authority over their own bodies (yet they deny the unborn child authority over his/her own body). They often (but not always) ignore or argue against the humanity of the unborn.

Facts & Statistics

Abortion became legal throughout the United States with the *Roe v. Wade* decision by the Supreme Court in 1973. Since that time, over 60 million abortions have been carried out in the United States. There were 41.9 million abortions worldwide in 2018. In 2015, over 91% of abortions in the United States were performed during the first 13 weeks of pregnancy. However, there are an increasing number of people who will argue for “partial birth abortion” even up to the day of birth.

Basic Bible Principles Relating to This

God is the giver of life: When God created man in the beginning, He “formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Genesis 2:7). However, this was not just about the first man; God gives life to all men. Paul pointed this out to the philosophers on Mars Hill: “He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things” (Acts 17:25).

God creates life in the womb: The psalmist praised God for this fact: “For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made...” (Psalm 139:13-16). When God called Jeremiah to prophesy for Him, He said, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...” (Jeremiah 1:5). God knew each one of us before anyone else knew we existed.

Human beings are made in the image of God: In the beginning, “God created man in His own image” (Genesis 1:26-27). Because of this, human life was to be valued and defended (Genesis 9:6). James said we are not even to “curse” others – let alone

kill them – because they “have been made in the likeness of God” (James 3:9).

There is no difference in the humanity or value between a baby in the womb and a baby outside of the womb: When Elizabeth was pregnant and met Mary, Luke recorded that “the baby leaped in her womb” (Luke 1:41). After Jesus was born, an angel told the shepherds that they would “find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12). In both verses, the same Greek word (*brephos*) is used for the child in the womb and the child out of the womb. As far as human life is concerned, there was no difference between one born and one unborn.

Murder is wrong: After the flood, God condemned murder and prescribed the death penalty for anyone guilty of murdering one who was made in His image (Genesis 9:5-6). One of the Ten Commandments was, “You shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13). The law would go on to specify that this would even apply to the killing of a baby that was yet unborn (Exodus 21:22-25). However, this was not just a command for the Old Testament. Murder is also condemned under the new covenant (Romans 13:9; 1 Timothy 1:9-10).

Bottom Line

Abortion is the active and deliberate taking of an innocent human life – one that has been made in the image of God. Therefore, abortion is wrong.

—Andy Sochor, *PlainBibleTeaching*

“THEY SHALL NEVER PERISH”

SWORD TIPS #2051 (SEPTEMBER 9, 2020)

Joe R. Price

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand (John 10:27–29, NKJV)

Jesus is the good shepherd who gave His life for His sheep (Jno. 10:11). He knows His sheep and is known by them (Jno. 10:14). Jesus uses the language of God's prophet Ezekiel as He explained His relationship with His followers: “‘You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,’ says the LORD God” (Ezek. 34:31). Today's passage addresses the security of believers. The Shepherd has the power to protect His sheep; that is beyond question: (1) Jesus speaks to His sheep, 10:27; (2) Jesus knows His sheep, 10:27; (3) Jesus gives them eternal life, 10:28; (4) His sheep are secure in His hand and in the Father's hand, 10:28, 29. At the same time, His sheep make choices that contribute to their security in Christ: (1) His sheep hear His voice, 10:27; (2) His sheep follow Him, 10:27. Sheep are exposed to danger when they wander from their shepherd's care. The same is true of Christians who stray from hearing and following the word of Christ (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Yes, Christians can fall away from Christ and be lost (Gal. 5:4; 1 Cor. 10:12). Falling away from Christ does not happen because Christ cannot save His sheep. It occurs when the sheep refuse to hear and follow the Shepherd (1 Cor. 5:1-5). Be a believer who hears and follows the voice of Jesus and be secure in Him. He will never lead you astray.

Some Thoughts on Psalm 108

Craig Thomas

Today's **Thought for the Day** comes from Psalm 108. In this psalm, David praises God for giving him the assurance of victory over his enemies. He begins by pledging that his “heart is steadfast” (v. 1) as he sings praises to God for His “mercy” (v. 4), “truth” (v. 4), and deliverance/salvation (v. 6). David rejoices as he recognizes that only God can give him the victory since “the help of man is useless” (vv. 10-13).

This is such an important lesson for us to learn as we daily battle Satan and sin. We can only gain the victory over sin through Jesus Christ. The apostle John makes this keen observation in 1 John 5:4-5:

“⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. ⁵ Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

The problem arises in that our faith is not always what it should be. It is reminiscent of the children of Israel when they left Egypt. As they approached the Red Sea, they were positive, if not downright gung-ho. They were giddy with excitement at the promise of freedom. The text says, “the children of Israel went out with boldness” (Ex. 14:8). However, when they turned and saw the Egyptians pursuing them, they sang a totally different tune! (Ex. 14:10):

“¹⁰ And when Pharaoh drew near, the children of Israel lifted their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians marched after them. So they were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the LORD.”

Then they turned on Moses and accused him (and by extension, the LORD!) of taking them “away to die in the wilderness” (Ex. 14:11). They moaned and groaned about how good life was in Egypt (Ex. 14:12), when nothing could have been further from the truth!

We often do the same thing. Living the Christian life requires us to “put to death the deeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13). Paul even goes so far as to describe this as a crucifixion (Gal. 5:24). Why? It is extremely painful to leave our old life behind. It is the most painful thing we will ever do! When Christ calls on us to live for Him it is easy to long for the “good ole days” when we lived for self. That's what the Israelites were doing as the Egyptians bore down upon them. They forgot the former hardship of Egypt; they forgot the Egyptians “made their lives bitter with hard bondage” (Ex. 1:14; KJV). We forget the same truth about our own lives and bad habits before we became a Christian. To return there is not the answer! We view it with delight and longing when, in fact, it is a return to bitterness and “hard bondage.”

When temptations press in upon us, we must resist going back to our own personal Egypt. The response of the LORD to the Israelites on the shore of the Red Sea is very instructive. Moses tried to reassure them in Exodus 14:13-14:

“¹³ And Moses said to the people, ‘Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall see again no more forever. ¹⁴ The LORD will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.’”

That sounds like good advice to me. However, quite amazingly, the LORD didn't think so! Instead “the LORD said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of