

Sanctity of Life Sunday  
True Vine Anglican Church

The phrase Sanctity of Life or Right to Life has many different interpretations and emphasizes that all life is sacred. For me, and I hope for you, it also includes the unborn. It is the rights of the unborn that I will focus my attention on this morning, and when those rights are violated, what I am really talking about is abortion. I will speak from my professional experiences and share with you some statistics that I hope will cause you to stop and reflect on this terrible form of infanticide. I realize that this topic is difficult for many to talk about and is probably the most emotionally divisive issue in America today. My intention this morning is not to offend anyone and certainly not to judge; however, we as a biblically based Church can no longer keep our heads buried in the sand, and those of us that have been blessed with the opportunity to stand behind this pulpit can no longer remain silent. It's time to draw the line in the sand!

Let me begin by sharing with you my perspective from my own personal experience (share early feelings – neutral, then what I experienced during my doctoral work in Healthcare Ethics).

I will not share with you the horrid details of that procedure and the aftermath.

However, I have never forgotten those vivid videos which convinced me, without a doubt, that abortion was morally and ethically wrong and that our country was involved in an infanticide holocaust of unimaginable proportions.

Let me share with you some unfathomable statistics. In all the wars that this country has participated in, including this present war in Afghanistan, the number of lives lost has totaled about 1.2 million men and women. Since *Roe vs Wade* was passed on Jan 23, 1973, 46 years ago, we have killed over 50 million unborn infants. That equates to 1.5 million/year, 3000/day, 124/hour, 3/minute, and 1 every 20 seconds. Considering these statistics, the most dangerous place in America is not on a battlefield but in the womb of a mother! What concerns me today is that for many Christians the sanctity of life or right to life phrase has become little more than a war slogan, rather than a product of serious Christian moral reflection and conviction. The secular world has imposed its worldview of free choice on our Christian moral conscience with such strength, in the hope that believe in the sanctity of life will eventually fade from our moral consciousness.

Listen to 2 Cor 4:4 – “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,

who is the image of God.” The secular world has been blinded! One way to prevent the Sanctity of Life or Pro-life belief from becoming a relic of our consciousness is for us to develop and agree with a more substantial understanding of what life is.

Dr. David Gusitee, a Christian ethicist, provides us with one such definition, and it is one that I agree with. He states that the concept of the sanctity of life is the belief “that all human beings, at any and every stage of life, in any stage of consciousness or self-awareness, are to be perceived as persons of equal and immeasurable worth and dignity and therefore must be treated in a manner commensurate with the nations moral status – life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness!” This definition suggests that all life is of intrinsic value, and we as Christians need to act accordingly. His definition also suggests that every human being, at all stages of existence, has a value that transcends our human capacity to dishonor and degrade that life.

Considering Dr. Gusitees’ definition, let me share with you some other thought-provoking information. In this country, from a medical perspective, we consider a person to be alive, a human being, if they have a heartbeat and brain activity or brain waves. The logical progression of this definition of what human life is would

be that any entity with a heartbeat and brain activity is human and has the rights of a human being. With that said, reflect on this: an unborn fetus has a detectable heartbeat and brain activity by the 12<sup>th</sup> week of gestation and therefore, by our definition of life, the fetus at 12 weeks is a living human being. Yet, almost 100% of all abortions occur at the 12<sup>th</sup> week of gestation. Killing a human being – you tell me. Just recently, Governor Cuomo of New York raised the bar by signing legislation allowing the abortion of a full-term fetus. The Godless tragedy continues.

Another set of alarming statistics are the reasons given for abortion:

\*5% due to rape, incest, fetal anomalies (anencephalic) (morally justifiable)

95% are for convenience – don't want to be a single parent, can't afford a child, child would interfere with lifestyle.

Another disturbing fact: a 14-year-old female may not buy cigarettes or alcohol or attend X-rated film, but she can have an abortion, no questions asked.

The pivotal question for moral reflection is this: should any civilized society give to its citizens the absolute right to kill another human being to satisfy their needs?

Before I close there is one other question we need to ask. What does the Bible say about abortion? Actually nothing. Jesus never talked about abortion because it

was not practiced in Israel during His day (it was a pagan practice). However, we do know Jesus' stand on the sanctity of life. Let me quote a few passages that suggest that the Bible is not silent about this issue:

\* Jeremiah 1:5 – “Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, and before you were born, I consecrated you.” (God at work in the womb – when you touch the unborn you are touching the handiwork of God)

\* Psalm 139: 13-14 – “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.”

I realize that this is a very controversial issue. However, as biblically based Christians and a biblically based Church, we can no longer ignore the elephant at the table. It's time we speak out against the abortion cloud that hangs over our nation!

- Isaiah 58:1 – “Cry aloud; do not hold back; lift up your voice like a trumpet; declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins.”

What can we do as faithful Christians?

1. Pray, Pray, Pray (for those who are pro-life, for the church to make a stand, for our country that our eyes will be opened, for organizations such as Anglicans for Life or Life Options, for those that have had an abortion).
2. Be informed (can't ignore the issue, read/reflect, preach the Gospel)
3. Get involved (volunteer in organizations such as Life Options or Anglicans for Life, teach our children the Biblical perspective of life)

Let me end with a quote from Mother Teresa: "Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching people to love but to use violence to get what they want. That is why the greatest destroyer of love is abortion."

I pray that we all will become a more active Christian voice for the unborn! +