

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

The following sermon was preached by Pastor John Heidengren at Prince of Peace Church in Hopewell, PA in January 2022.

They were scared!

The pregnancy test was positive!

The young couple from Texas quickly calculated how many weeks along
the *mom-to-be* was. Fourteen!

Texas' had a new law – no abortion after a heartbeat is heard

They knew they'd have to drive to Louisiana for the abortion

They scheduled the procedure

But before they drove to Louisiana, the couple decided to get an
ultrasound

They went to a pregnancy care center this past Wednesday

The father refused to go inside!

But the mom bravely went

The ultrasound showed two babies — identical twins!

Mom called Dad. “Come inside NOW!” She was elated!!

When Dad arrived – he saw his babies on the ultrasound screen, and he
began to cry

The babies were sucking on each other's toes!

Dad was a believer, he told the clinic – but he was afraid!

A male volunteer told him about all the resources that are available and encouraged him

“The pregnancy care center will help provide maternity clothes, doctor referrals and help with housing if needed”

“They’ll also go into the delivery room if Mom wants”

“We walk with her through the entire pregnancy and beyond”

“After the pregnancy, the Center will provide cribs, diapers, car seats, baby food and whatever else is needed”

“So, there’s great support for the woman once she chooses life”

What a great story of hope and life!!

Did you know, once a mom-to-be sees her baby on the ultrasound, she’s much more likely to choose life?

Eighty percent of the time!

They chose life! That’s what God did when He formed those twins in her womb! God chose life!

And that’s what He calls us to do – choose life!

God is FOR life!

God loves life and offers us eternal life!

I know I have eternal life!

Even though I know I’m going to die someday

But I don’t see that as my DEATH, I see it as my DEPARTURE

John 5:24 says Christians pass out of death into life

This weekend, this month, churches *all across America* celebrate the
Sanctity of Human Life

Life is SACRED – life is SPECIAL – *ALL life matters!*

I started this message on Friday afternoon while I watched the March for
Life speeches in front of the US Capitol

Hundreds of thousands of marchers, mostly young people, listening to
speakers honoring the sacredness of life

Hoping that our nation may soon come to its senses and outlaw legal
murder in America

Hoping that THIS YEAR will be the LAST March for Life

Today I want to speak about God's heart for human life

I begin with Psalm 139 – the writer says:

*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's
womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful, I know that full well. 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, your eyes saw my
unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your
book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your
thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!*

Both the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah were called to serve God while they
were still in the womb

Isaiah writes: *Before I was born the LORD called me; from my birth he has
made mention of my name. He who formed me in the womb to be*

his servant to bring Jacob back to him and gather Israel to himself.

The Bible says all human beings are created in the image of God
 We are special above all else God created
 God's commandments say do not murder
 He protects human life because it alone represents the image of God
 As if God says: "*Life is so important that no one has the right to murder it.*

Don't end it. Let it live. Because all humanity represents my handiwork; it is Mine to do with as I please. My image is, in mysterious ways, stamped into human life."

God sets apart human life as unique, distinctive, and valuable
 Life begins at conception and continues to develop in the womb where God
 is at work, shaping each child into the precise kind of person He
 desires

Remember Mary, the mother of Jesus?
 She had an unplanned pregnancy
 And that life within her was a separate, independent God-created life
 A human life with as much right to live BEFORE birth and AFTER birth

God loves life! People, humans, you and I – made in God's image –
 precious, sacred, valuable, with purpose and dignity

But the Bible also speaks of things God hates
 How can God – Who is love – hate?
 He hates certain things because He is love

He hates certain things because of their negative effect on His people
whom He loves

In Proverbs 6 there's a list of things God hates

The first is PRIDE – where we discount other people – some people just
aren't as valuable

The second is A LYING TONGUE – where we lie to people that a *pre-born*
baby is not a baby and abortion is not murder and God won't show
mercy to those who regret their abortion and repent and turn to God
for His complete forgiveness

The third is plain and simple – SHEDDING INNOCENT BLOOD

For 49 years we have lived in this country with legal murder – over 62
million deaths!

What blood could be more innocent than a helpless baby in the womb?

The fourth thing God hates is A HEART THAT CREATES WICKED PLANS
– abortion is a billion-dollar business and wicked plans are
constantly being made to keep the dollars flowing

The fifth is FEET THAT RUN SWIFTLY TO EVIL – we live in a culture that
encourages death from pre-born to elderly

The sixth is A FALSE WITNESS – God hates when something like abortion
is called “health care” or “reproductive rights”

The seventh is ONE WHO SPREADS DISCORD – those who oppose the
sanctity of life want to divide this country

Do you know the leading cause of death worldwide in 2021?

Not cancer – 8 million deaths

Not the coronavirus – 3.5 million deaths

Not traffic accidents – 1.3 million deaths

Not suicide – 1 million deaths

It was abortion – 42 million deaths

About 100 million people died in the world last year – 42% from abortion

I think that's something we can stand up and say – That's not right!

We follow a God who loves life – so we stand up against death

Those of you that went on Friday's March for Life may have been on the
last one.

The dozens of Marches that Blanche and I and our children have
participated in may finally be at an end

Each march wasn't just a protest of a 1973 Supreme Court decision
legalizing murder

It was also a celebration of life!

A celebration of women who make courageous choices to give life

Courageous choices to be a mother or choose adoption

Courageous because our culture doesn't support their choices

And they have to fight every step of the way in our disposable, culture of
death

Please pray for all those who stand up for life, especially our own Anglicans
for Life

They held a wonderful Summit this weekend, part of which I watched online
– I was greatly encouraged!

49 years ago, the Supreme Court brought a decision that said life is not
sacred

But I believe the tide is turning, especially among this next generation

I was so encouraged to see signs of young Marchers that said: “We are the Post-Roe Generation”

Perhaps if the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision is overturned this June there will be a new March to celebrate life – and in the summer months!

A time of great thanksgiving – and a continued stand against abortion which may still be legal in many states

There is great optimism that the March yesterday could be the last March

Let us all pray, as we begin this new year, that this will be the last year that pro-lifers need to march in Washington to protest the Roe v. Wade regime.

Let us all pray that our country would once again celebrate the sacredness of all life – that all life matters – all life counts!

Closing prayer

Lord God, Thank You for creating human life in Your image.

Thank You for my life and all the lives of those gathered here and all those we love. Thank You for teaching us through Scripture the value You place on life. Help us to uphold the sanctity of life in our church and our community. Give us the strength to stand up to those forces that seek to destroy the lives of those most vulnerable, the unborn, the infirm and the elderly. Today we commit ourselves to never be silent, never to be passive, never to be forgetful of respecting life. We commit ourselves to protect and defend the sacredness of life according to Your will, through Christ our Lord. AMEN.