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Grace Fellowship Church, Port Jervis, New York

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Life Chain Sunday

Selected Scriptures

Prayer: *Father, again I thank you for your grace, I thank you for your goodness, and I thank you most of all for the cross. I thank you that you have paid the price and we are so gracious and so thankful for the fact that you have paid that price. This morning, Lord, this is a heavy subject and a heavy time and so I pray for your Holy Spirit's power, I pray for your Holy Spirit's unction, bless this time, bless our looking into your word, give us the grace and the strength that only your Holy Spirit can, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Well, because today is communion Sunday and Life Chain Sunday, I'm going to deviate a little bit from our meditation on the life of Christ in order to direct our attention as to why, as lovers of Jesus, we participate in the Life Chain, why we as a church are pro-life. And now you might say this is starting to get a little political and this is really about politics and not the cross, and I say sometimes politics intersects with the cross. And as Jesus puts it with regard to something as political as taxes, we are to

"render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Well Caesar is claiming more and more now and what belongs to God is now under assault in our country and the issue of abortion will never, never belong to Caesar. Our presidential elections of late have marked a major split among evangelicals as what it means to be pro-life. Some have said that it's important, some have said, but not any more so than the environment or hunger or poverty, and I believe they could not be any more mistaken, and this morning I want to take some time to explain why and why it has everything to do with the cross that we celebrate on communion Sunday.

See, the most basic question every one of us ever asks of ourselves is the obvious one, it's why are we here? I mean what is the chief end of man? And if we all know the catechism, we know the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. So how do we glorify God and what is this glory that we're speaking of? Well, we say God's glory is his character and his attributes made manifest and that's just a fancy way of saying God's glory is the display to the world of who God is and what he does. And in all that God made, there was only one unique creature created as the crown of his creation, a creature created to help him make his character manifest, and we are that creature. God demonstrates his character and his attributes, his glory through us, and he does so

because we alone bear what is called the *imago Dei*, that is the very image of God. God made that clear in *Genesis 1:27* where it says: *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.* God tells us how we are to go about glorifying him in one simple sentence in the book of *Ephesians*. It's in *Ephesians 5:1*, it says this, it says: *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.* Doesn't get more simple than that. *Be imitators of God.* That's who we are. That's what we do.

Now the enemy of our souls hates the fact that we are God's chosen instrument and that we alone are the ones who bear his image. And so it should come as no surprise that the focal point of his attack on God would be directed right at that image. You see, God's enemy Satan is a coward. He is an already defeated foe, and he doesn't have the guts to face off against his Creator, so he chooses instead to focus on the Creator's image bearers as well. Just picture Al Qaeda, I mean, they were obviously afraid to attack the United States itself, so instead they chose to attack the greatest image of the United States in their mind and that was the World Trade Center. Well, Satan hates God but he also fears God, and so he chooses to unleash his fury in particular at the image of God in God's image bearers.

There are three major areas that the church and the culture are at war in today, and surprise, surprise, they all have to do with the image of God. They all have to do with the image of God and how we, as his image bearers, go about the task of imitating God. You see, Satan through our culture is at war with God over the design, the diversity, and the development of the image of God. It all centers around this imago Dei. And the first area of war is in the area of design. And the battlefield is homosexuality and homosexual marriage. You see, in the beginning God made man and he made women and he made them with a unique and complimentary design. This is what *Genesis 1:26* says, it says: *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female, He created them.* Now Jesus as well was unequivocal in stating that marriage was only to be between a man and a woman. This is what he said in *Matthew 19*, he said, *"Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate."* Homosexual marriage turns that mandate upside down. It attacks the design of the imago Dei by denying its complementarity. It demands the right to re-fashion that image to suit the creature instead of the

Creator, and it's all part of our pattern of rebellion. God, you are not going to tell us how we're going to bear your image. You see, we suppress the truth about God in unrighteousness. We reject the Creator and instead we worship the creation. And God's punishing us for that and his punishment for that is not what we thought, it's not wars and famines and pestilence, it's God abandoning us to us. It's God giving us up to our own insanity. This is what God says in *Romans 1:22*, he says: *Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.*

See from our culture, even to the church, we've got everything backwards. Even the Christian community, we say there's homosexuality, so God is greatly offended. That's not the case at

all. In fact it's just the opposite. The truth is God is offended by the fact that we suppress the truth about who he is and how we worship him as a false image, and so he gives us up and what he gives us up is the perversion that we are now in. You see, homosexuality and gay marriage is God's judgment on us. And because we suppress the truth of God, God abandons us to the enemy's attack. And to no one's surprise, he attacks the imago Dei and he does it by design.

Now there's a second attack by the enemy on the imago Dei and it's in the area of diversity. It's the sin of racism. Understand, racism is an inherent attack on the imago Dei. The enemy attacks the image of God within us because it doesn't look or act exactly like we do. You know red and yellow, black and white, they are all precious in his sight. But we also know that race and nationality are key elements that the enemy use to divide and separate us. There's a war going on between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness and the prince of darkness wars against the image of God in us by falsely dividing us on the basis of race and color and ethnicity and he delights when the bearers of God's own image turn on each other for nothing more than a physical, cultural or ethnic difference.

You know, last week I spoke about the carnage that took place in

Rwanda, and it was a classic example of the image of God plundered through racism. I mean there were hundreds of thousands of mostly women and children who were murdered mostly by those who called themselves Christians. They were shot, they were beaten, they were hacked to death by machetes. See, the Hutus set upon the Tutsis by attacking their humanity. They got ahold of the airwaves and day in and day out they used them to broadcast propaganda against their neighbors. And you know what the Hutus said in that propaganda? You know what they said about the Tutsis? They said they were cockroaches. That's what they said over and over and over. They just constantly spread that idea, your neighbors are cockroaches. That was a demonic assault on the imago Dei, and that's exactly how the enemy works. Strip God's image bearers of their humanity, turn them into vermin and then killing them is not so bad. Amazingly, even the secular world looked on the Rwandan genocide as demonic, and that's exactly what it was. *God is no respecter of persons* according to *Acts 10*. He says, *Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart*, in *1 Samuel 16*. In *Galatians 3:28* God says: *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*. And we say how many ways does God have to say this? Racism is an attack on the image of God. And as homosexuality attacks its design, so racism attacks its diversity, and both sins have been around since the fall of Adam.

And so has the third attack. It's the one that seeks to attack the image of God while it is developing. We sing from *Psalm 139*, we just did it this morning: *You knit me together in my mother's womb.* In this country that womb has now become the most dangerous place to be. One out of four children in the womb will die in this country. One out of two in Russia. And if you don't see this connection as demonic, as a direct attack by the enemy on the image of God, you will not see being pro-life as that important. Perhaps you'll wonder as many did during these last few election cycles if it's not just another cultural problem like the environment or poverty or hunger. But as bad as those problems are, none of those involve murder. Again, we just have to look into the scripture to find that from the beginning the enemy's attack on the image of God found its most effective tool in murder. Listen to what Jesus said in *John 8:44*, he says: *"You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies."* For the ancient Jews, this murder took the form of child sacrifice. *Leviticus 20* says this: *"Say to the Israelites: 'Any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him. I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his*

children to Molech, he has defiled my sanctuary and profaned my holy name. If the people of the community close their eyes when that man gives one of his children to Molech and they fail to put him to death, I will set my face against that man and his family, and will cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in prostituting themselves to Molech.'"

We are a offended and we are appalled at the barbarity and the cruelty of a culture that would unimaginably offer human sacrifice, but we are no different. I mean they offered up their sacrifices on a pagan altar; we offer them up in an abortion clinic. They did it because they were primitive people who were fearing for their lives, I mean, they faced attacks, they faced starvation and they hoped against hope that somehow this sacrifice of their own flesh and blood would appease those blood thirsty demons and give them a measure of safety. It was a monstrous bargain of absolute evil. We offer our children on a similar altar, but we offer them up because they're not convenient or they're not perfect or even because they're not the right sex. And so I just want to ask you, who is more wicked in this exchange, who is more wicked, the ancient pagans or us?

And something else that I'd like you to notice about that passage in Leviticus. What is interesting to me is that it puts the

responsibility squarely where it belongs. Let me just repeat to you what it says. It says: *"Say to the Israelites: 'Any Israelite or any alien living in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death. The people of the community are to stone him. I will set my face against that man and I will cut him off from his people; for by giving his children to Molech.'*" What is interesting here is that God holds the man responsible. And have you noticed how we have turned that completely around? You know, the sexual revolution was supposed to liberate women. And again, with all the other things that the enemy promises, we find out that it did the exact opposite. What it did was it liberated men and what it liberated them from was their responsibility. I mean, now thanks to feminism, men simply rid themselves of the responsibility by writing a check and telling their women to take care of it. And years later what seemed like such a simple solution continues to haunt, debilitate, and sometimes destroy the women who will fall prey to the enemy's lies. Remember Jesus said the devil was a murderer from the beginning but he also said that he was a liar and the father of lies. Abortion is the perfect solution for the devil because it combines the lie with the murder and then it attempts to enslave the only remaining victim, and that is the mother.

You know, I recently read an eye witness account by a woman who was

at the Rwandan genocide and saw it literally from inside. And the woman who wrote this book had an opportunity to interview many of the people who actually participated in the murders. And what they said was interesting. They said the very same force that drove them in a rage to commit murder then instantly turned around and filled them with an extraordinary guilt over the very murders they had just committed. They went from intense rage to intense guilt in a second. That's exactly how the enemy works. You see, many women victims of abortion instantly go from intense relief to even more intense guilt from the very same enemy. And only the grace of God and the blood of Jesus Christ shed on the cross can purchase a new life and a new hope for a mom who is caught in the horror of abortion. As one veteran of a crisis pregnancy center put it, "I stand in awe at the wonder of a God who can change lives, remove the guilt, and release anguished souls from grief." Jesus Christ alone can do that. And when he died on the cross 2,000 years ago, all of the sins of all of us were in the future, some 2,000 years in the future including the sin of abortion. None of them were a surprise to Jesus.

I'd like us to consider what a privilege we have in bearing the imago Dei, and understand this is a privilege that is under constant attack by Satan. And whether it's an attack on God's design in homosexuality in gay marriage or whether it's an attack

on God's diversity by the way we diminish the value of the image of God and those that don't mirror us exactly, we need to confess it. And when it comes to an attack on the development of the bearers of the image of God, there is a sense in which every single one of us in this room is guilty. I mean, since 1973 there has been more than 58 million abortions in the United States. 58 million successful assaults on the imago Dei. There is no way that that has not affected you and me.

A number of years ago, the EPA rightly cracked down on power plants in Ohio. And they cracked down on them because they were spewing sulfur dioxide and it was causing acid rain to destroy forests all the way up in Maine. And the EPA, this time at least they got it right, they understood that pollution somewhere in Ohio can destroy something far, far, far away. And so, too, the moral pollution that takes place in abortion. There's a certain heart hardening that takes place in a culture and it trickles down into our politics and it affects even you and me no matter how far removed from the origin we may be. See, moral pollution is really no different than any other type of pollution, and God speaks of it in *Psalms 106*. Listen to what he says: *They served their idols, which became a snare to them. They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons; they poured out innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of*

Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Now the effect of that moral pollution is a collective hardening of hearts of all of us. And I always used to wonder why the prophet Daniel, righteous a man who has ever walked the earth, a man who lived in an incredibly wicked culture, why he prayed the type of prayers that he prayed. Listen to what he said in Daniel 9:4-6, he says: I prayed to the LORD my God and made confession, saying, "O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. And when I read that, I think well, why is it that Daniel uses the pronoun "they" instead of the pronoun "we"? I mean, why doesn't he use the pronoun "we" instead of "they"? What is it Daniel in this prayer is including himself in amongst all of the corporate guilt of the land? And I ask it, is it not because the wickedness of a culture in some way affects every single person in that culture? And we have not escaped that wickedness. Our hearts have become hardened as well, I mean, Fred was pointing that out. You can't have the stuff wash over you all the time without that hardening take place. And so it is right and it is proper that we mourn our own corporate wickedness.

Now for me, as I -- just to echo what Fred just said, going to the Life Chain is one tiny way to push back against the hardening of the heart. And what typically accompanies a hardened heart is something even worse, it is a seared conscience. God describes in vivid terms what this looks like in 2 Kings 6 in a truly awful passage. This is an historical event that actually took place. It says: *Afterward Ben-hadad king of Syria mustered the entire army and went up and besieged Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria, as they besieged it, until a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and a fourth part of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver. Now as the king of Israel was passing by on the wall, a woman cried out to him saying, "Help, my Lord, O king!" And he said, "If the Lord will not help you, how shall I help you? From the threshing floor, or from the winepress?" And the king asked her, "What is your trouble?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give your son, that we may eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' So we boiled my son and ate him. And on the next day I said to her, 'Give your son, that we may eat him.' But she has hidden her son." When the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his clothes.*

Now the king, this king is a wicked king in the first place, and even a wicked king recognizes the profound wickedness of a seared conscience. I mean, cannibalism and murder doesn't even register

in this woman's conscience. I mean all she can think about is the injustice of being denied the ability to eat her neighbor's child. We can't conceive of a conscience that defiled. But understand, starvation is what drove that wickedness. There is no such external force driving today's abortion culture other than convenience and shame. You know, conscience is the inner sense of what is right or wrong and everybody, whether you're a pagan or a Christian, everybody gets one, they're given by God. *Romans 2:15* says: *They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them.* So God may give us a sense of right and wrong but the world is quite capable of shaping and molding that conscience to fit its definition of what is right and wrong. And furthermore we know that consciences, just like hearts, are subject to hardening, that they, too, can become evil. And again the word of God speaks of it, it says in *Hebrews 10*: *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.* It is an evil conscience shaped by a culture that is determined to attack the imago Dei that now says a woman's right to choose is the new moral imperative. I pray every single day that God continues to show us the mercy that we do not deserve instead of the justice we have so horrifically earned.

As the elders begin distributing the bread, I'd like us to take some time just to consider this threefold assault on the image of God: The assault on the design, the assault on the diversity, the assault on the development, and as we pan out over the entire problem in the entire culture, it is literally of God's mercy that we are not consumed.

And as the bread is being distributed, let me again give you this warning from God in *1 Corinthians 11*, it says this: *But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in the an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we were chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.* You know, I say this each month, that communion basically is an extremely serious undertaking and you do not take communion lightly. And that if you're not absolutely confident you're a child of the King and if you first -- or if you first need to be reconciled to your brother before you bring your gifts to the altar, then just pass the elements on. On the other hand I also want to point out that we can make the mistake of thinking that unless we're spotless, unless we are flawless, we are unworthy to receive communion, and that, too, is a lie from the

enemy. You know, being a child of the King doesn't mean that you don't sin and it doesn't mean that you don't fail. What it does mean is that we've recognized that salvation is a gift. It's a gift that no one is capable of earning by being good. And I quote each month what Dane Ortlund said when he said, "In the kingdom of God, the one thing that qualifies you is knowing that you don't qualify, and the one thing that disqualifies you is thinking that you do." It also means that when we do fail, well we're aware that we've sinned because we've got the Spirit of God living inside of us, and so we grieve as people who know that we have a Father, a Father who longs to forgive and to cleanse us, a Father who says in *1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* See, being a child of the king does not mean that you are sinless. It means you understand that when you do sin, you have an advocate with the Father, someone who is speaking out on your behalf. *1 John 2:1 says: My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father -- Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.* And so it's only because we have Jesus Christ's righteousness and not our own that we are now free to eat at God's table. So I say so if you love your Lord, do not deny yourself the privilege that Christ purchased for you. He lived the life that we were supposed to live and then he died the death we all deserved to die so that we could be made

worthy of heaven. So understanding that our righteousness comes from Jesus, now is a good time to thank God for his abundant mercy.

1 Corinthians 11:23 says: For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." So take, and eat.

I want to raise the question that Fred raised once again and the question is: Why -- why should we go to the Life Chain? And again some folks might raise the question of efficacy, and that's exactly what Fred spoke about. He said, what's the point of standing up and holding a poster for an hour and a half? And the big picture is you really think you're going to change somebody's mind? And I think actually the answer's probably no. I mean, I rather doubt that anybody's mind is going to be changed by something like that, and the reason for doing it, I believe, the reasons are not necessarily to change somebody's mind, although it would be wonderful if it did. I see three reasons for going to the Life Chain. Number one is to bear public witness; number 2 is to encourage one another; and number 3 is to encourage myself.

First, to bear public witness. I know for myself I do it because I

need to make a public declaration. It's almost like what takes place at a baptism. I need to have the public understand that I am on one side and not the other. I'm on the pro-life side and not the pro-choice side. Taking a public stand by holding a sign clearly puts me on that side and not the other. Here's why I think it really matters. You know, after World War II, President Eisenhower did something extraordinary, and he did it to the German citizens who lived in the towns that were surrounding Buchenwald, a place where thousands of Jews were executed. He took his soldiers and he marched them into the town and the soldiers roused the citizens and forcibly marched them into the concentration camp. It was a place they had studiously avoided going to and Eisenhower understood that these people's ignorance was a highly vincible ignorance, one that they were solely responsible for, one that they had cultivated in order to avoid having to make any type of difficult moral choice. Their lack of a choice was a choice, and Eisenhower was determined to hold them responsible for it. See, he knew that ignorance was the final refuge of a moral coward and he wasn't about to let them off. Well, willful voluntary ignorance is the trademark of our country's response to abortion. See, ignorance is a form of protection. One of the most appropriate questions that could ever ask somebody who is pro-choice is this: Can you describe for me exactly what takes place in an abortion? We all know the facts. I mean, we know the facts of an abortion.

There's the mom, there's the doctor, there's the nurse, and there's the baby. And we know that when the procedure starts out, there are four living human beings, and when the procedure is over, one of those human beings is dead and the other three are still alive. That much we know. We know that the purpose of the procedure is to take the life of that baby. But I would ask somebody who is pro-choice: Can you describe to me what actually takes place there? And if the person says no, then you certainly would have the right to say how is it you can support something you know nothing about? If the person is at all honest, well he or she would be forced to say they know nothing about it because they really don't want to know anything about it. And I submit to you that anyone who's actually witnessed what takes place during an abortion, that is the forcible dismemberment of a living human being within the womb of his mother, if they had any conscience at all, be radically traumatized and be transformed by that, my guess is they would have a complete change of opinion. But you see the goal here is, consciously or unconsciously, the goal is to remain ignorant. And the point is to claim that invincible ignorance that claims I'm not responsible. That allows me the convenience of allowing children to be butchered without my having to respond to it. And, you know, Eisenhower wouldn't tolerate that form of cowardly ignorance and he was a sinner just like you and me. Makes me wonder how God views this. So standing with a sign is simply a

means of proving to myself that I have not embraced that form of ignorance. *Proverbs 24* comments on that. It says this: *Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, "Behold, we did not know this," does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?*

Secondly, I need to go to encourage others. You know when we first started the Life Chain there was up to 1500 people that were in attendance. Now Ella Mae said we're lucky if we get 300. You know it's important that we stand up to encourage others to stand. And *1 Thessalonians 5:14* says: *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.* And finally we go to the Life Chain to encourage ourselves.

As the elders begin distributing the cup, let me just remind you that after World War II, the people who did stand up for what was right and true and decent, well they were identified and they were honored as the culture that had lost its moral compass began to regain it. I don't know if that's ever going to happen in our lifetime, but I do know that at some point all of us will one day stand before our Creator and judge to give an account of our lives.

And I know it's an encouragement to me to know that I've taken a public stand in a very, very small way against the overwhelming tide of wickedness that grows progressively more wicked every single day.

I once had the privilege of hearing John Piper speak about the righteousness of God displayed in Christ on the cross. Listen to what God says in *Romans 3:23*. He says: *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.* Piper pointed out an interesting point here. He pointed out that for many years, people could have accused God of just passing over sins. I mean we sinned and we were not judged. And we did it again and again and again and we were not judged. God even comments on that, he says: *God, in his forbearance had passed over sins previously committed.* Well the cross proved once and for all that God's righteousness could never pass over sin. God set forth Christ as a propitiation to demonstrate his righteousness and to show to the entire universe that the hideousness of sin had to be paid for. The cross also

demonstrated the righteousness of God who would publicly pay that price of redemption by the sacrifice of his Son *so that he could be the just and the justifier of those who have faith in Jesus.*

Understand, the cross points out just how important the glory of God is, how critically important it is to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and that glory is God's display of his character on the cross. His sacrifice including the cross was too -- not too high a price to pay to preserve the glory of God.

Now understand that we, too, have a role in preserving and demonstrating the glory of God. God tells us we are to be imitators of God. I mean that is really why we are here. And sometimes spiritually that means that you have to go to war even if it's only holding a sign for an hour and a half. Now I'll say it again, there is no greater privilege in the history of the universe than the privilege of bearing the imago Dei. And when that image is being slaughtered as it's developing in the womb, sometimes it means literally rescuing those who are being led to slaughter. And always it means honoring, supporting, and praying for those that God has put on the front line, those that God is using to go up against those who in design or diversity or development attack the image of God. And as we meditate on what Christ has done for us on the cross, consider what role you have in fighting this good fight because it's a fight for the image of God. Take a moment to think

about what God would have you do.

1 Corinthians 11:25 says: In the same manner he also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me. Take and drink.

This is the part that we call head, heart and feet and this is the part where we talk about some of the practical aspects of just what it means to remember the Lord Jesus. And one of the things I wanted to talk about is just one more practical argument that I know that I have in my own mind that I just wonder, I'm more or less thinking out loud here, and I think one of the things that is inarguable in any discussion between those who hold the pro-life position and those who hold the pro-choice position is that both of the participants in that argument, we know one thing for absolute certainty is that both of them are absolutely alive. And I can think right off the bat that I need say nothing further but to point out the obvious fact that both of them are alive should make the following argument not even necessary. Because I want to argue that if you are making this argument and you are alive, well that means that you passed whatever physical or social or philosophical gauntlet there was during your mother's gestation and somehow or other you made it alive and you made it alive to that nine-month

finish line. And it's just striking to me that having made it safely in your own personal lifeboat to the destination of birth, you are now as somebody who is vocally pro-choice caught up in the process of pulling up the gangplanks, pulling in the lifesavers, making sure that the ladders are out there to make sure that somebody else in the exact same position you once were in doesn't have the opportunity you clearly and obviously had. It's only the opportunity to be alive. I mean, you can tell me a thousand different reasons for why life is difficult for single moms, for women who want a career, for women who are struggling with a potential of some kind of birth defect. But I would ask you if this was your own mother facing some kind of trauma, some kind of socioeconomic situation, some kind of physical situation, any situation that you want to trot out, what would have happened if she had listened to that same pro-choice argument in your case? You wouldn't be here. You wouldn't even be here to make the case against life. So how can you argue for the chance to remove the chance for another human being to have what you already have without the very argument itself seeming like the height of selfishness. I got mine, now it's incumbent upon me to make sure you don't get yours. And we're not talking about money or opportunity or property. We're talking about life itself. See, it seems to me to be pro-choice is to deny for others what I have already received for myself and it's simply the right to be born.

I find it stunning that so many on the evangelical left seem so concerned about social justice and not that concerned about abortion when the ultimate social injustice is taking someone's life. I mean concerns about education and opportunity and racism and health, they don't mean a thing to you if you're dead, and that's what happens when life is taken. So I have a hard time hearing arguments that put those issues over the issues of life.

And finally I have one comment that I want to make about abortion and politics and this election. The way I see it, there is a choice, there's a series of choices and the choice is between slim and none. Between candidates who I think most people consider to be sub par to say the least. We have one candidate who is a democrat who is a validly pro abortion, who says there are no rights whatsoever for a baby in the womb, has no problem with late term abortion, and we have another candidate, a republican, who is frankly not trustworthy, who claims to have had an epiphany and that epiphany has made him pro-life. Frankly I don't trust him, and I think the chances of him doing what he says are slim. But we're comparing slim to none. And when you compare slim to none, slim wins. Now I understand there are people who say I can't vote for either of them. And I understand that they're placing their trust firmly in God to do something extraordinarily miraculous, and that may be so, but I just want it said that in my view -- this is

me speaking, this is not me Grace Fellowship, this is me -- there's just no way that I could justify in any way, shape, or form the morality of voting for a democratic candidate. It's that simple. And having said that, let's pray.

Father, I just want to again lift up your church. I want to lift up the task that we have in front of us today. I want to thank you for the Life Chain. I want to thank you for what you have given to us in terms of -- of an opportunity. And I also want to just again I think of what Fred was saying, the struggle that he had with trying to get an idea of what the scale is, what has actually taken place and so we have a video, just a short two-minute video that when I listened to it, it finally gave me an idea of the scale of this. And so Lord, I prayerfully I would like just to spend the last two minutes just listening to this video. You can see the pictures but it's mainly what you're going to hear. Should be right up there.

(video playing)

I just repeat what he says at the end. God help us. Let's pray. Again *Father, I pray for your grace. It is of your mercy that we are not consumed. I just look at that, that's just this country. I just cannot imagine what this is like for the entire world going*

up. And so I pray, Lord, that you would give us your grace, your peace, your power and your wisdom to go forth and to do what you would have us do, to be as proactive as we can in pushing back against the attack of the enemy, against the design, against the diversity, against the development of the very image of God. Give us that grace, I pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.