

Life VS. Life

**Stand Alone Message | John 10:10; Jeremiah 2:9-13;
Proverbs 14:12; 16:25**

INTRODUCTION

Several years ago as I was preparing to preach here, God redirected my heart to speak on the issue of life. During the course of my study and in preaching the message, God revealed that it was time for me to get involved in some way. Through that and the events that followed, we as a church established a relationship with our local crisis pregnancy care center and I have been privileged over the course of about four-and-a-half years to serve them as chaplain. God has richly blessed our partnership. Our church was very instrumental in the center's ability to purchase a new ultrasound machine at the end of 2020 and, from the testimony of the center staff, have been among the most faithful supporters of the work. I am thankful for that and I applaud you.

This issue is near to my heart and I have grown in it through our time partnering with the center, but it is even nearer to God's heart. Those involved on the front lines deserve our spiritual and financial support. Additionally, those who have made choices that we look down on or that have been on the wrong side of the issue need our love and help.

Recently, through an opportunity to participate in a strategic planning day with Your Choice Resource Center, I thought about this issue. So often, we look at it as an issue of choosing life or choosing death. But what if it is not an issue of choosing life or choosing death, but what if it is an issue of choosing between two ways of life?

ILLUSTRATION

In his daily devotional entitled *New Morning Mercies* the April 16th entry, Paul David Tripp wrote about man's search for life. This is what he penned. He penned that "Everybody searches for life somewhere. God has placed the quest in each of our hearts. It is there to drive us to Him. It is there because we were made for Him. But sadly, in their lifelong quest for life, most people ignore God. In their God amnesia, they look for life where it cannot be found, and because they do, they always come up empty."

INTRODUCTION

From the beginning, God has declared a message of life and death. The enemy has attacked God's message and, instead, made the choice about two ways of life.

Look at Genesis 3. Man was perfectly situated and perfectly cared for in the Garden when the enemy showed up. He questioned God's commands to the humans. When he was given an answer, he contradicted God's word.

BIBLE

'And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: '

Genesis 3:4

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/GEN.3.4>

EXPLANATION

His first words were a direct contradiction to what God said, and the absolute truth. From that point, the enemy convinced the woman and the woman the man that there are two pathways of life: God's way and man's way, and that man's way is best.

Throughout the Bible and time, this has been the conflict. In John 10, John records Jesus's claim to be the good shepherd who gives his life for the sheep. Through Him, man can have life that is true and abundant. Conversely, the enemy comes to steal, kill, and destroy.

BIBLE

'The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. '

John 10:10

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/JHN.10.10>

EXPLANATION

This has been the battle from the beginning in the issue of life. While God declares the pathway of life and death, the enemy declares two pathways of life and man's pathway - which is really his - is best.

Think about it as it relates specifically to this issue of life from the abortion front. Does the world present abortion as a choice of life versus death? No. They present abortion as a choice for life...the chance for my best life. The Bible declares that God provides true and abundant life. As we consider life this Sanctity of Life Sunday, recognize that we all have two choices for life: God's way and man's way. Each of us needs to choose wisely.

What does God's word reveal about true and abundant life?

Beginning with Jesus's claim in John 10:10, let's examine the Scripture to see the results of choosing God's way of life vs. man's way of life.

1. THE BEGINNING OF LIFE (GEN. 1:26-27)

EXPLANATION

We do not need to wonder about life's beginning. It is declared to us in the opening pages of God perfect word. Unfortunately, even professing Christians have adapted to a view that is not biblical as it relates to origins and life.

ILLUSTRATION

Recently, I had the opportunity to have dinner with a college friend. He was about two years behind me, but we served in Pensacola for several years together. His family now lives in Waco, Texas as he pursues his Ph. D. He has a science background and already has opportunities to work at Institution for Creation Research and Answers in Genesis when he completes his Ph. D. He is passionate about creation and believers having a good understanding of it. He told me that he has been amazed at how many professing Christians he has encountered who do not believe in the Genesis account.

EXPLANATION

It's unfortunate that believers find reasons to doubt what God's word teaches regarding the origin of man.

This is what the Bible declares about man's origin in Genesis 1:26-27.

BIBLE

'And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. '

Genesis 1:26-27

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/GEN.1.26-27>

EXPLANATION

The whole basis of man's origin and God's original intent for him is declared here. Note these two important truths declared here about man's origin.

A. BY GOD'S CREATION

EXPLANATION

Man is neither the product of evolution according to secular definition and explanation, nor is he the product of the widely accepted belief called theistic evolution. God did not create life in some form that eventually evolved into man. Man is the special and direct creation of God, formed from the dust of the ground by the will and work of God Who then breathed life into the form He made.

B. IN GOD'S IMAGE

EXPLANATION

God's image does not reflect physical likeness. Man does not physically resemble God. Made in God's image and likeness speaks of a similarity of nature, primarily in the senses of comprehension (intellect), choice (ability to weigh and decide), and conduct (we act not on instinct, but on the basis of our comprehension and choice).

2. THE STRUGGLE OF LIFE (JER. 2:9-13)

EXPLANATION

The account of man's creation provides the recognition of God as the source of life, not only in the physical sense, but in the spiritual sense as well.

I want you to see what the Bible says in Jeremiah chapter 2.

Jeremiah was an Israelite who declared God's word to God's people. He shared a rebuke God had for His people in this text. What was the basis of the rebuke?

BIBLE

'Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead. For pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the

fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. '

Jeremiah 2:9-13

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/JER.2.9-13>

EXPLANATION

The basis of the rebuke was two fold.

A. GOD'S PROVISION

EXPLANATION

What does the passage identify of God?

He is the fountain of living waters. He is the source of life - physical and spiritual. Man has NO life apart from God. He is the Creator and Sustainer of physical life and He is the Provider and Preserver of spiritual life.

B. MAN'S PERVERSION

EXPLANATION

What does the passage identify about the people to whom the message was given?

These people forsook God, the source of life, and worked from their own wisdom and resources to create and choose life in, of, and for themselves.

This began in the Garden when Adam and Eve believed the lie of the enemy and rejected God's word, continued throughout history, and still happens today. It represents, not man choosing death over life though that is actually the truth. Rather, it represents man choosing his own way over God's way. It is man choosing his way of life, rather than God's way of life. Just as the enemy convinced Eve that man's way of life is better than God's way, man continues to choose his own way over God's way.

This applies across the whole spectrum of life, just as it does in the specific area of the pro-life and pro-choice issue. It is not a social issue, a political issue, or even strictly a moral issue. At it's heart, it is a Gospel issue because life and death - or as the enemy presents two ways of life - life and death are always connected to the Gospel.

Listen again to this verse.

BIBLE

'The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to **kill**, and to destroy: I am come that they might have **life**, and that they might have it more abundantly. '

John 10:10

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/JHN.10.10>

C. GOD'S PROMISE (GEN. 3:15)

EXPLANATION

From the moment man chose his own way, God provided for him to have life. Man chose his way over God, and every man since makes that choice many times. God, in His love and grace, promised life and provided for life through His Son Jesus Who lived the life we cannot, died the death we all deserve, and rose to life.

3. THE CHOICES OF LIFE

APPLICATION

Each of us makes these choices often, even many times daily.

Will we choose God's way or our own?

A. GOD'S WAY

EXPLANATION

God's way is provided by and through Christ.

B. MAN'S WAY

EXPLANATION

Man's way is described in two verses in Proverbs.

BIBLE

'There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, But the end thereof are the ways of death. '

Proverbs 14:12

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/PRO.14.12>

BIBLE

'There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, But the end thereof are the ways of death. '

Proverbs 16:25

<https://my.bible.com/bible/1/PRO.16.25>

APPLICATION

How can you and I demonstrate what it is to choose God's way of life?

1. EXPERIENCE IT

APPLICATION

Begin a relationship with Christ through the Gospel.

Develop your relationship with Christ by walking in and with Him daily.

2. DEMONSTRATE IT

APPLICATION

Yield your life to Christ so that His life and love will flow through you.

3. SPEAK IT

APPLICATION

Share that Jesus is the better way. He gives life that is true, life that is more, life that is better, life that rises above.

CONCLUSION

You can choose God's way of life or man's way of life.

Which way will you choose?

God's way of life is true and abundant. In many ways everyday, we choose which way of life we will follow.

While the choice is presented as two ways of life, ultimately, the choice is life and death. Deuteronomy 30:19 and Jeremiah 21:8 declare the way of life and the way of death. We have the choice. Choose life by choosing Jesus!

CHRIST FOLLOWER

Experience, speak, and demonstrate abundant life in Christ.

CHRIST SEEKER

Know that life that is true and abundant comes only from God through Jesus Christ. Believe, experience forgiveness, and enjoy the assurance of eternal life in heaven.