

Defending Life in a Schizophrenic Nation

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Bible Text: Genesis 4:1-10

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This is when the wise pastor just pronounces the benediction. Bu I, alas...

I was handed a note a little... a little confusing. There is a cougar. Apparently there is a cougar in the parking lot, so please keep these doors sealed and be very careful when you leave. No, a cougar with its lights on, a red cougar with its lights on. So if that is yours or you think it might be, please get on out there. This must be the plate: 3CFM20.

If you have your Bible would you turn please to Genesis chapter four, once again at verse one.

Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."

Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.

So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."

Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?"

He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground."¹

May God's blessing rest upon his Word.

Let's pray.

Father, please help us now. Guide us by your Holy Spirit. Speak to us through your Word. Drive home to us your truth. Forgive us our sins as we come. We ask it in Christ's glorious name. Amen.

January 22nd, 1973 was like December 7th, 1941, a day that will live in infamy. The attack on our Pacific fleet in Pearl Harbor brought America into World War II and before that war was over 407,000 Americans were dead on account of it.

And on January 22nd, 1973 the majority of justices on the US Supreme Court declared that the US Constitution guarantees the right of a pregnant woman—for reasons sufficient to herself—to kill her unborn child. Elective abortion became the birth control method of last resort.

But this war against the unborn became much more lethal than World War II with casualties of well over a million a year. And the war goes on.

At this point, 37 years later, over 50 million American lives have been snuffed out by means of legalized abortion. That is more than the entire population of Canada. That is about the number of all Americans living in the northeast of the US.

And so the Sunday near January 22nd has been designated sanctity of human life Sunday. Frankly, I wish I did not have to speak on this subject and I suspect that many of you do not like to hear about it.

Irish orator Edmund Burke spoke of an issue, quote, "About which it is difficult to speak, but about which it is impossible to remain silent."

This is such an issue. And it is has been several years since we have devoted an entire message to this subject.

I call this message, "Defending Life in a Schizophrenic Nation."

Let me begin with the basics. Human life is precious. We don't have to venture very far in Scripture to see this established. Look at Genesis chapter one and verse 26.

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing

¹ Genesis 4:1-10.

that creeps on the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.²

So precious is life that God proclaimed a severe warning to any who would have the presumption to take innocent human life.

Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning,"³ he said.

From the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man.
From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.
Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man."⁴

Genesis nine verses five and six.

As we read in our Scripture reading this morning after the first of a long history of murders on this planet, the Lord said to Cain, "The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground."⁵

"You shall not murder,"⁶ is one of God's commandments. The Hebrew uses a verb that is not applied to the killing of animals or ever applied to killing in self defense or national defense or to capital punishment. God is very clear on the question of whether or not human life is precious.

Human lives are precious in youth which is why Jesus told his apostles to allow the little children to come to him.

"Forbid them not," he said, "For of such is the kingdom of heaven,"⁷ Matthew 19:14.

It is because even the lives of the young are precious that we grieve when we see images of infants who die in the rubble of the earthquake in Haiti.

Human lives are precious in old age. This is why the Scripture exhorts us to, "Rise up before the gray headed and honor the presence of the old man,"⁸ Leviticus 19:32.

Some of you may have seen the photo in the *Carroll County Times* a couple of days ago I think. The Laurence family and the Johnson family with their 4H club visiting at a local retirement home.

² Genesis 1:26-27.

³ Genesis 9:5.

⁴ Genesis 9:5-6.

⁵ Genesis 4:10.

⁶ Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17.

⁷ Matthew 19:14.

⁸ Leviticus 19:32.

Life is precious whether or not it is perceived as productive or valuable to society, whether or not it is self sustaining, it is precious because humans are the apex of God's creation, made in his image, crowned with glory and honor.

But what about the child as he or she is yet unborn. Is there any indication in the Word of God that God views the unborn child not as a mere appendage of the mother, but as a separate living entity? Well, of course there is. We read Psalm 139 earlier.

For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed.⁹

And God said to Jeremiah, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."¹⁰

Isaiah said, "The Lord formed me in the womb to be his servant. He formed me in the womb to be his servant," Isaiah 49:5.

And, of course, Elisabeth, wife of Zacharias said the baby in her womb, the one we know of as John the Baptist leapt in her womb, leaped I guess we would say today, leaped in her womb at the approach of Mary with Jesus in her womb.

The evidence of Scripture and of our own God given reason is so clear that the Christian Church has long declared the intentional killing of the unborn to be sin

As we noted in our 2006 message called, "America's Holocaust," the Didache, the earliest known Christian teaching outside the New Testament declares, quote, "Thou shalt not murder a child by abortion/destruction."

Clement of Alexandria wrote in the second century, "Those who conceal sexual wantonness by taking stimulating drugs to bring on an abortion wholly lose their own humanity along with the fetus."

And Calvin in his commentary on Exodus 21 said, "The fetus, though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human being and it is almost a most monstrous crime. It is almost a monstrous crime," he says, "to rob it of the life which it has not yet begun to enjoy. If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, because a man's house is his place of most secure refuge, it ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy a fetus in the womb before it has come to light."

⁹ Psalm 139:13-16.

¹⁰ Jeremiah 1:5.

And, of course, today with the wonderful insight into the unborn that the science of neonatology gives us, we know that at about six weeks from conception, quote, “All the major internal organs that are present in the adult already appear in the fetus, even the toes and fingers are asserting themselves, the eyes, nostrils, ears, mouth, lips and tongue are visible. The tiny heart is beating 160 times a minute and brain activity can be measured. He may begin to test his new knees and kick. But mom won’t feel anything for another eight weeks or so.

“By two months from conception he is beginning to swallow. By the end of the third month, a family resemblance can be seen. By the fourth month he begins to suck his thumb. By the fifth and sixth months if the amniotic fluid is removed from his mouth and vocal cords, the infant may be heard crying in the womb.”

The scientific evidence is no incontrovertible. Even pro abortionists such as Mary Calderone, former medical director of Planned Parenthood which, as you know, is America’s largest abortion provider, said in the *American Journal of Public Health*, quote, “Abortion is the taking of a life,” unquote.

Alan Gutmacher, the late president of Planned Parenthood admitted in his book, *Planning Your Family* that a baby is conceived at fertilization. “Fertilization, then, has taken place. A baby has been conceived,” he said.

Dr. Neville Sender, founder of an abortion clinic in Milwaukee says this. Listen. “We know it is killing. But the states permit killing under certain circumstances.”

Of course an abortionist knows it is killing. If the mother leaves the abortion clinic and the baby is still alive, the abortionist has failed. We know it is killing.

One organization went so far as to call abortionists modern Herods, educated assassins, monsters of iniquity.

The unborn child is human and at all periods differs in degree and not in kind from the infant and from the adult. Therefore, we must regard it as a human being with an inalienable right to life and that we must regard that its destruction is homicide.

Now what radical, right wing, pro life group said that? The American Medical Association in the 19th century.

But if the evidence of Scripture and of human reason and of science all agree, then the obvious question is: Why is abortion still legal 37 years after *Roe v. Wade*?

Well, I don’t think there is any single or simple answer to that question. One good one might be abortion remains legal because of the sexual revolution. Pandora’s box has been opened. Victoria has no more secrets. And abortion remains legal because that is how most Americans want it to be.

Or we could say the problem is the Church has failed to speak with one voice. I could read you the testimony of pastors who speak in favor of the woman's right to choose to kill her baby. They usually leave that part out.

We can say the problem is the Church has failed to speak with one voice on the subject or the pro life movement has failed to effectively convey our message. Or it has become too closely aligned with one political party and has, thus, been politicized and ignored as just another partisan, right wing group.

We could say the problem is many Christians have refused to seek out or get involved or too many of us have allowed issues less important than the preservation of innocent life to decide their vote.

Think of the election that brought Bill Clinton into office. I remember the theme was, "It is the economy, stupid."

It is the economy, stupid. All of these other things are secondary. Our money, that is what matters. So go ahead and elect someone who is in favor of killing innocent babies. It is the economy, stupid.

And a large number of evangelicals voted for him.

But part of the problem is, I suspect, America's schizophrenia.

Now, I use that term not in reference to the personality disorder with which you may be familiar, but in reference to the confusion that we face as a nation.

The term schizophrenia comes from Greek words meaning split mind. Let me illustrate what I mean.

I am going to read a quote and I want to ask you to guess who said it.

"The great vital element in our system is a belief of our people in the pure doctrine and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Let me say that again.

"The great vital element in our system is a belief of our people in the pure doctrine and divine truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Who do you think said that? Let me give you a suggestion. Jerry Falwell in 1984? No, it was the House Judiciary Committee in 1854.

Here is another one.

“Why may not the Bible and especially the New Testament be read and taught as a divine revelation in school? Where can the purist principles of morality be learned so clearly or so perfectly as from the New Testament?”

Was it D James Kennedy in 2004? No. It was the US Supreme Court in 1844.

Who said this?

“Christianity is the foundation of those morals and manners upon which our society is formed? It is their basis. Remove this and they would fall.”

Not Dr. Bob Jones, but the Supreme Court of South Carolina, 1846.

Who said this?

“The morality of the country is deeply engrafted upon Christianity and not upon the doctrines or worship of other religions.”

What would happen to you in the press if you said that publicly as, say, a politician or statesman today?

Let me say it again.

“The morality of the country is deeply engrafted upon Christianity and not upon the doctrines or worship of other religions.”

That was the Supreme Court of the state of New York in an 1811 decision.

Our founders were the ones who determined that the military should have a chaplaincy program. And it was understood that those chaplains would be Christians.

The first official act of congress was to declare that sessions of congress should be opened with prayer.

With the loss of Britain as a trading partner during the War for Independence there was a shortage of commodities in the colonies including a shortage of Bibles. What did congress do? They acted to import 20,000 copies of Scripture from Holland, Scotland or elsewhere.

Congress called for a national day of thanksgiving and prayer for the continental army’s victory at Saratoga.

Now this was no mere pluralistic plea to a higher power. Citizens were urged to offer, quote, “Humble and earnest supplication that it may please God through the merits of Jesus Christ mercifully to forgive and blot out our sins, blot our sins out of remembrance

and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom which consists in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Now here is where the schizophrenia, the split mindedness comes in.

Our government and our laws were established on biblical principles among the clearest of which is human life is precious because it was created by God. And we were created in his own image. Yet we are being told and we are allowing our children to be taught that we are nothing but the chance by products of slime and time.

Think about it. If mankind is only an accident of natural forces, without purpose or meaning, then why shouldn't I get rid of an unwanted pregnancy? What could be more important than my comfort, my convenience, my plan, my goal? We kill animals all the time for food. Are we not just highly evolved animals? If we are nothing more than advanced apes, the happy accident of a chemical collision, then there is no reason why we may not clone humans for spare parts, harvest organs from the weak and defenseless, cull from the race those who have defective genes or who don't measure up to our high standards.

And, there is no reason why we should not get rid of children born or unborn who interfere or who might interfere with our lifestyle.

When you think about it, those who take the lives of others or those who take their own lives are often only acting consistently with what they have been taught about our origin. The conflict comes because there are still laws against such things. But those laws were based upon an old discredited cosmology that taught that God created the world and man and that God established certain laws of right and wrong.

You see, if God did not create the world and he did not create man in his own image and grant him authority and dominion over the other creatures, then those who disdain all law are the ones who are really being consistent with the western world's accepted view of reality.

In other words, if you reject the biblical world view, the question you must grapple with is: Is there anything with finality that separates mankind from the intelligent chimp or the intelligent dolphin?

Well, Peter Singer of Princeton University says no. Humans who bestow superior value on the lives of all human beings solely because they are members of our own species—and he would say that is precisely what we Christians do—are judging along lines strikingly similar to those used by white racists who bestow superior value the lives of other whites merely because they are members of their own race.

Well, I would like to answer that charge in a moment, but follow his reasoning to its logical conclusion. If we compare a severely defective human infant with a non human animal, a dog or a pig for example, we will often find the non human to have superior

capacities or rationality, self consciousness, communication and anything else that can plausibly be considered morally significant.

Now think about it. To move from such reasoning to the point of advocating for the supposed benefit of us all, the elimination from society of those who are mentally disabled or severely physically disabled or the elderly with dementia, that is a very short train ride. Once you accept his premise, it is a very short train ride.

We already have one renowned scientist, Nobel prize winner Francis Crick who has reportedly said, “No, newborn infant should be declared human until it has passed certain tests regarding its genetic endowment. If it fails these tests, it forfeits the right to live.”

Professor Singer argues that bestowing superior value on all human beings is similar to racism. He calls it specism.

I heard him speak on this at the Community College of Baltimore County in Essex a couple of years ago. But, in fact, the biblical view—think about it—the biblical view that all human life is precious because we were created in the image of God, that is our safeguard against the vilest acts imaginable.

Princeton law professor Robert George says there is a simple test to determine how pagan a society has become. A Judeo Christian society respects the intrinsic value of life whereas a pagan society is known by the body count.

On Friday Barry and I were honored to conduct the funeral service for Scot Dodeck’s father Bill. Bill was a member of what Tom Brokaw has called America’s greatest generation. He fought to rid Europe of the evil of Nazism. He was with the US Army’s ninth division at the Battle of the Bulge. And as I said at the Friday service, it is impossible to imagine what life would be like for ourselves and our descendants if the Allies had not succeeded. No doubt the death camps that scarred central Europe would have spread like a fungus to England and Russia and Africa and ultimately the United States. And those among us judged unfit to live would have been put to death by very efficient means.

The gas chambers of the Third Reich were the logical conclusion of a naturalistic or materialistic godless philosophy, a philosophy that declares that only the fittest should survive.

Hitler, you see, had adopted their view of German philosopher Hegel.

“No action is right or wrong in itself,” Hegel said, “If it produces a desirable effect, it is acceptable. No action is right or wrong in itself. If it produces the desirable effect, it is acceptable.”

A nun who lived in Nazi Germany, lived through Hitler’s Germany, her name was sister Rutilia said, “Even before Hitler came to power, this philosophy was heavily

propagandized and generally accepted in Germany. The educational and the judicial systems began to lean in that direction. When Hitler could not longer be successfully or openly opposed he set up the killing centers. He ordered the deaths of the insane, the aged in state homes, the retarded and the deformed. Their crime was that they could not contribute. They were a burden and an expense. They were not wanted. And because they were not wanted, they were killed.”

She was present when the trucks came to haul away the handicapped children that she cared for.

Dr. Leo Alexander was a consultant to the secretary of war on duty with the office of chief counsel for the war crimes at Nuremberg. He probed the Nazi nightmare for two years. Now, after the war, of course, they are probing the Nazi nightmare to find out what caused it. And this is what he wrote in the *New England Journal of Medicine* on July 14th, 1949.

“A propaganda barrage was directed against the traditional compassionate 19th century attitudes toward the chronically ill and for the adoption of a utilitarian, Hegelian point of view,” from Hegel mentioned. “Sterilization and euthanasia of persons with chronic mental illnesses was discussed,” get this, “ at a meeting of Bavarian psychiatrists in 1931. Sterilization and euthanasia of persons with chronic mental illnesses was discussed at a meeting of Bavarian psychiatrists in 1931.”

That is fully two years before Hitler came to power.

“The fatal first step,” still quoting from this man Dr. Leo Alexander, “The fatal first step was the acceptance of the attitude that there is such a thing as a life not worthy to be lived. Fatal first step, the acceptance of the attitude that there is such a thing as a life not worthy to be lived.”

America’s schizophrenia is evidenced in this. Although our laws remain, in great part, based upon a biblical world view, much of our philosophy, our sociology, much of what our educational system is teaching and much of what calls itself science is closer to the thinking of prewar Germany than it is to biblical truth.

Psalm 11 asks, “If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do? If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?”¹¹

How then do we defend life in a schizophrenic nation? Well, we must respect and honor life ourselves, certainly, the lives of the elderly, the lives of the disabled, the lives of infants, the lives of the unborn. And we must convey this respect for life to our children and to all those with whom we have any influence. This is why we must continue to underscore the sanctity of human life from America’s pulpits, in our newspapers, through letters to the editor, through rallies, through sit ins, through legislation in the voting booths.

¹¹ Psalm 11:3.

[?] was a French born English author who was educated at Oxford. He was a member of parliament early in the 20th century. He said this. “A man who knows that the earth is round, but lives among men who believe it to be flat, ought to hammer in his doctrine of the roundness to the point of arrest, imprisonment or even death. Reality will confirm him. He is not so much testifying to the world as it is, which is worth nothing, as he is testifying to him who made the world and who is worth more than all things.”

Friend, let me ask you. Parents, do your children have a Christian world view? Do your children have a Christian world view? Have you imparted to them a Christian world view? Have you passed it along?

Defending life means supporting crisis pregnancy centers, helping unwed mothers. It means considering opening your home to a foster child or a special needs child or pursuing adoption.

Now there are some encouraging signs. As you may have heard, for the first time in the 14 years that the pollsters at the Gallup organization have been asking the question, a majority of Americans now identify themselves as pro life. It is a slim majority. It is as slim a majority as you can get, 51 percent. But it is a majority.

World magazine suggests one reason may be the prevalence of ultrasound technology. They cite a group called Option Ultrasound which says that when pro life centers combine counseling with ultrasound it produces nearly 60 percent more decisions against abortion than counseling produces alone.

I don't know, Bev, if you have seen that at the Alpha Pregnancy Center, statistics probably similar to that.

You see when the parents or the mother alone can actually see the infant within the womb and see it as a child and not merely some mass of tissues, then the likelihood that she is going to go ahead and have that child killed become much less.

But there is one more encouraging sign. *World* magazine, this week's *World* magazine report. “According to the Pew Research Center, although young white evangelicals are on average 14 points less conservative than older evangelicals,” and they use certain determinations to determine that, “They are more pro life than their older counterparts. Seventy percent favor making it more difficult to obtain abortions, versus only 55 percent of us older white evangelicals.”

Now they didn't cite the statistics for African American evangelicals. I am not sure what that is. But that is encouraging.

I am aware that there are some here who have undergone elective abortions. There are others here who have encouraged a girlfriend or a wife to do so. And I trust that you are

aware that there is forgiveness through Christ. And there is no reason to go through life carrying guilt for a sin that has been atoned for by your Savior.

The solution, of course, is repentance and faith, repentance and faith. And that is also the solution for America.

God has every reason to carry us away into captivity as he did with Judah and Israel or destroy our nation in some other way. It is sobering when we read of God's judgment upon his people.

2 Kings 24 writes of Jehoiakim, King of Judah.

And the LORD sent against him raiding bands of Chaldeans, bands of Syrians, bands of Moabites, and bands of the people of Ammon; He sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD which He had spoken by His servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the LORD this came upon Judah, to remove them from His sight because of the sins of Manasseh [a previous king], according to all that he had done, and also because of the innocent blood that he had shed; for he had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, which the LORD would not pardon.¹²

2 Kings 24.

"But pastor," you say, "We are not Judah. America is not God's chosen people."

No, we are not. But sin has consequences. Sodom and Gomorrah were not God's chosen people either. The Bible says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, And all the nations that forget God."¹³ Psalm nine verse 17.

The people of Israel and Judah were carried away into bondage. We may already be on that road as a nation. We may already be in financial bondage.

"The borrower is servant to the lender,"¹⁴ Proverbs 22:7.

One could argue we are already the servants of China. We need to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our friends and relatives and neighbors must hear that although we have sinned against a holy God if we will repent of that sin and trust in Christ alone, the one who lived the sinless life, who died as a sacrifice for us, the one who paid our debt upon the cross. If we will trust in him alone, all our sins can be forgiven. We can receive everlasting life.

¹² 2 Kings 24:2-4.

¹³ Psalm 9:17.

¹⁴ Proverbs 22:7.

“Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.”¹⁵

Let's pray.

Oh Father, we know that even the taking of one innocent human life is wicked and vile and it is a stench in your nostrils, but, Father, we can only imagine what it must be to witness the murder of 50 million innocent human lives and to call it legal, to say it is according to our constitution. Oh, Father, forgive us for this. Forgive us for this. We do pray for repentance. We pray that you would convict us, each one of us for not speaking out, for not doing all in our power to see this scourge removed from our land. Lord, may we honor life, all life. May we respect it. May we view human life as sacred, created in your image.

Father, may that understanding permeate all decisions that we make. Have mercy on this land we pray. We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

¹⁵ Isaiah 1:18.