

Attacking the Image of God

Selected Scriptures; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 1-29-23

Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a disgrace to any people. – Proverbs 13:34

*"How a society treats its most vulnerable is always the measure of its humanity." -
Ambassador Matthew Rycroft of the UK*

In an effort to equip one another to trust and love in these difficult days, I'd like to focus on the cultural issue of abortion today. Abortion is often in the news right now for a number of reasons. The Word of God does address cultural issues in our day and we must see how it applies if we are to love God and love others as we should.

1. ***Man cannot attack God directly so he attacks the image of God in man. (Genesis 6:5-8, 11-13; 9:1-7)*** Like someone who rips up a picture of another in order to express their attitude toward them and the decisions they've made. – Genesis 4:1-8

Note before the Flood: Evil thoughts (hearts). Note before the Flood: Filled with violence. Note after the Flood: Command to be fruitful and multiply. Note after the Flood: Command to kill those who kill man because man is made in the image of God. The command to oppose murder is in the context of the command to populate the earth. As harsh as it may seem and as denied as it may be, the hatred of God is essential to the nature of sinful fallen man. Since we cannot attack God directly, we attack the image of God, especially in mankind made in the image of God. A natural hatred of God may attack any image of God that threatens its will being done. A natural hatred of God may attack any image of God when its will isn't done. That's why God's directive after the Flood was to be fruitful and multiply and to put to death those who murder those in the image of God. We need to see the issue of abortion as an issue of attacking God in the attack on those made in the image of God. The unborn is a human being made in the image of God that should be protected and provided for in honor of God.

2. ***Pregnancy is the beginning of life in the womb. (Psalm 139:13-16)*** Like dawn is the beginning of daylight though the sun has not been fully revealed. – Song of Solomon 6:10

What happens in the womb is a work of God. What happens in the womb may be unseen to man but it is not unseen to God. The context of the days ordained for the psalmist is the days of weaving in the mother's womb by God. Who are we to slap the hand of God as it weaves a new human being in the womb of the mother? Pregnancy is a blessing; not a merely human choice; not an accident; not a tragedy; not a threat.; not simply a consequence of sin; not a blob of tissue; is a work of God from the beginning; involves a human being from the beginning; is a call to trust and love, not something to be feared. We need to see pregnancy as the beginning of life in the womb from conception. Because the baby in the womb, from conception, is a human being made in the image of God, then we must honor God by protecting and providing for babies in the womb.

3. ***Abortion is the taking of a life in the womb. (Exodus 21:22-24)*** Like taking the life of someone in their own bed as they sleep – a place normally seen as one of security and rest. – 2 Samuel 4:11

If this passage was simply about justice for a woman who is accidentally hurt by two men fighting, then the reference to a pregnant woman would be unnecessary and confusing. But it is obvious that the justice for injury here would certainly include any harm to the mother but would certainly also include justice for harm to the child in the womb through a premature birth. If the unborn child is born prematurely without injury then a fine will be demanded by the husband. If the unborn child is born prematurely with injuries then a just punishment would be required. The ‘eye for an eye’ laws were a way of speaking of a just punishment, not necessarily a literal infliction of the same injury. That just punishment would include death if the baby died as a result of the premature birth and the struggle between the men. This argues that the life in the womb deserves the same justice as a life outside the womb would deserve. Abortion is a problem, not a solution; is murder; is murder often for the sake of money, immorality and independence/equality; is an attack on dehumanized people we want to get rid of; is an attack on man created in the image of God and therefore, an attack on God; is never necessary to save the life of the mother if it is a normal pregnancy in the womb; is not the only option; is traumatic not therapeutic; is unnatural; is child-sacrifice (idolatry); but it is not the unpardonable sin. We need to see abortion for what it is if we are to rightly determine what we should do. Abortion is a sin; it is an act of violence that is a problem and creates more problems; it is not a morally sound solution.

4. ***When we dehumanize we can justify inhumanity. (Ezekiel 16:15-22)*** Like calling someone a monster to justify one’s hostility toward them. – John 10:20

God is illustrating the spiritual adultery of Israel. He identifies the gold and silver and jewels and cloth and children involved in their idolatrous worship as belonging to Him. God connects their sacrifice of their children with their ‘harlotries’. God clearly highlights the seriousness of their worship of other gods by highlighting what they will do in honor of those gods: take the life of their own children! What or who we worship will determine the kind of sacrifices we make and the kinds of sins we will commit. Abortion is a kind of child-sacrifice that usually requires the dehumanizing of that life in the womb. We need to see the kind of arguments for abortion that can be applied to justify other kinds of murder. We naturally dehumanize those we treat inhumanely. If we can dehumanize the life in the womb, we can dehumanize life outside the womb, and we have and we will.

What should we do?

Affirm children as a blessing. Whatever the challenges of being a parent, children are still a blessing. (Psalm 127:3) Pray for the leaders of our country and states. Pray for the spread of the gospel. Oppose abortion with loving and moral actions. Oppose politicians who favor abortion. Encourage adoption. Support crisis pregnancy centers. Offer help to those in need of provision. Offer hope to those in need of pardon. ***We need to oppose*** abortion in light of what it is: the murder of a human being in the image of God. ***We need to offer*** to those involved in abortions one way or another the good news of forgiveness through another murder, the murder of the Son of God, Jesus, in our place! - Romans 4:5; 5:6