

Psalm 139 - Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

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[0 : 00] O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise. You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down. You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue, you know it completely, Lord. You hem me in, behind and before. You have laid your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there. If I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me.

Your right hand will hold me fast. If I say, surely the darkness will hide me and the light will become night around me. Even the darkness will not be dark to you. The night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

[1 : 08] 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.

Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you. If only you would slay the wicked, O God. Away from me, you bloodthirsty men.

They speak of you with evil intent. Your adversaries misuse your name. Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord, and abhor those who rise up against you?

[2 : 09] I have nothing but hatred for them. I count them my enemies. Search me, O God, and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts.

See if there is any offensive way in me. And lead me in the way everlasting. Amen. Amen. A couple of things before we start.

To look at this subject this morning. Firstly, pens are being passed around. There aren't little sheets. You can use the back of your notice sheet. That may help. And it's to say that through this talk, it's not that we'll get to cover everything.

You may find that there's questions that you have that you want to ask afterwards. Please feel free to do that. But what we do want to do this morning is to hear what God's word has to say.

So let us pray. Let us talk to God and ask for his help. Our Father God, we come to you.

[3 : 46] For you are the creator of life. You are the Lord of life.

And you are the one who alone can change a life. And so we ask that through your word this morning, you would cause each one of us to surrender all our opinions, all our thoughts, and all our ideas, and submit them to the authority of your word and your truth.

And we ask that your truth, your word, which is living and powerful, would change us and show us the meaning of life and our response to the subject of abortion and the right to life.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, in 1983, the Eighth Amendment was introduced into the Constitution of Ireland.

It states, the state acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother guarantees in its laws to respect and as far as practicable to defend and vindicate that right.

[5 : 43] I'll read it again. The state acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother guarantees in its laws to respect and as far as practicable by

its laws to defend and vindicate that right.

It was inserted in response to the growing demand for abortion following the legalization of abortion in the UK in 67 and in the US in 73.

Over the years in this country, it's been challenged. The X and Y case of the 90s and the tragic death of Savita Halapanavar and her 17-week-old baby in 2012 who had died have all added to the calls to repeal the Eighth.

However, our present constitutional position is that both the right to life of the mother and the unborn are protected and that the life of the mother prevails wherever a continuation of the pregnancy poses a real and substantial risk to the mother's life.

If the Eighth Amendment is repealed, there will be no restriction on the mother's constitutional rights in relation to her decision to terminate her pregnancy.

[7 : 12] Effectively, it will mean abortion on demand. In practice, that means abortion becomes a personal and social choice.

It simply does not suit to give birth. And with advances in screening, that means a baby with any medical defect can be aborted at will.

In Italy, a baby very recently was aborted at 22 weeks because of a cleft palate. In the UK, the majority of the 180,000 annual abortions are for minor defects.

In Russia, there are more abortions than there are births. And in Ireland, ten women travel every day to another country seeking an abortion.

We should be very clear. Repeal the Eighth is not about a mother's right. It's about personal choice. It's about abortion on demand.

[8 : 25] It's about deciding what I want, even if that means taking the life of an unborn child.

Growing pressure from our TDs, the media and various lobby groups has resulted in the government establishing what's called the Citizens' Assembly.

It's a group of about 100 people which was chosen by poll representative of the country. They will listen to various debates and opinions of medical and social experts and then they will publish their findings and give their recommendations.

And this is due to be finished in the summer of 2017. But whatever the findings and the opinions and the recommendations, as Christians, I believe that we should listen not to the voice of the world but to the voice of God.

It's not about what I want but about what God has said. It's not about my personal choice but it's about what God commands.

Our ultimate authority lies not with our government or with the courts but with Scripture, with God's spoken word to us.

[9 : 51] So what does God have to say? Well, first, God creates all life.

God creates all life. The beginning of the Bible story introduces us to the creator of all life. The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being.

A mother may produce an egg, a father may produce the sperm, fertilization may take place but it is God who creates and gives life.

David understood this when he wrote Psalm 139. He 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.

[11 : 11] When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. Before medical technology, before scans and ultrasounds, here we are given a picture of unborn human life.

God knitted us together. God wove us into a human being. just as a tailor would knit and weave together the most beautiful of Persian rugs with intricate and detailed design, so God is personally and intimately involved in the designing, creating, forming, and fashioning of life.

Medical doctors talk about the early development of human life. At conception, a ball of cells develops that carries with it all the information to sustain and grow life.

The ectoderm from which develops skin, nerve, and tissue. The endoderm from which develops liver and intestines. The mesoderm from which develops bone and muscle, all of which is no bigger than a poppy seed.

The human individual comes into existence as a minute informational speck. His subsequent prenatal and postnatal development may be described as a process of becoming what he already is from the moment he was conceived.

[12 : 59] Poetically, Job put it like this, did you not clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?

Life begins at conception and that life begins with God. So God creates all life.

God sustains all life. When Job had heard that his children had been killed when their house collapsed in a tornado, he fell to the ground in worship to God and he said these words, naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall return.

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. The Lord sustains life, the Lord starts life, and the Lord alone takes life.

We have no power over life. we don't get to decide when we are born or when we die. God sustains and God rules all of life.

[14 : 26] Later on, Job, as he reflected, would say this, if it were his intention and he withdrew his spirit and breath, all mankind would perish together and man would return to the dust.

we live as if we have the self-ordained power to maintain our life. But if God should decide to remove his sustaining hand from us, our life would end at this very second.

Psalms 104. How many are your works, O Lord? In wisdom you made them all. The earth is full of your creatures.

When you hide your face, they are terrified. When you take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. Medical science tells us that by week seven, we are no more than five millimeters long, not much bigger than a simple grain of rice.

And yet, my arm and my leg buds protrude more, the beginnings of my elbows appear, and my hands and feet are paddle-shaped.

[15 : 55] Internally, my brain has divided into distinct segments, and my cerebral hemispheres are growing fast, as are my muscle fibers. My heart, which bulges out, is becoming a four-chambered organ, and is beating 150 beats a minute.

My intestines are developing, and my internal sex organs are now nearing completion. In five more weeks, you will know if I am a boy or a girl.

Our life is so fragile, but we live as if we are immortal. We make decisions as if we controlled our destiny, but it is God who gives us the very breath that we breathe.

It is God who makes the heartbeat and sends oxygen running through our veins. God sustains all life. God creates life, God sustains all life, life, and God values all life.

There is not one life on planet earth that God sees as inferior or superior. All are valuable in the sight of God.

[17 : 20] Job again understood this. He knew that his life was no greater than one of his servants, servants, and his servant was no less than Job's life.

Job 30. If I have denied justice to my men servants or maid servants when they had a grievance against me, what will I do when God confronts me?

What will I answer when called to account? Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one who formed us both within our mothers?

You see, in a culture as Job was writing, where servants were thought of as sub-human and at times not worthy of life, Job makes the case that all life is valuable and we are all created by God. Except for we live in a society where life has been devalued. where those still in the womb are not worthy of life.

[18 : 31] In the recent BBC documentary, A World Without Down Syndrome, it was revealed that 100% of expecting mothers in Iceland terminate their pregnancies when they discovered their baby was Down Syndrome.

In Denmark, it is 98%. In the UK, it is 90%. In the Netherlands, not only do they perform late abortions, they terminate the life of a baby after they are born in cases of serious malformation. In Sweden, abortion is allowed even if you do not like the sex of your baby. For countless more, the baby is disposed of simply because it does not suit.

God values all life, especially those who are weak and most vulnerable. In fact, God demands the protection of all life.

Proverbs 24, rescue those being led away to death. hold back those staggering towards slaughter.

[19 : 49] If you say, but we knew nothing about this, not he who weighs the heart. Can he sorry, but we knew nothing about this, he who weighs can the rescue those being led away to death.

Hold back those staggering towards slaughter. if you say, but we knew nothing about this, does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it?

Will he not repay each person according to what he has done? God so values the life of each and every human being that he demands that we protect the unborn, that we provide justice for those still in the womb.

So God creates all life, God sustains all life because there is a purpose to all life.

The Bible reminds us that we were created by God in the image of God and for the glory of God.

[21 : 09] Revelation 4 You are worthy our Lord and God to receive glory and honour and power for you created all things and by your will they were created and have their being.

From the very second of our conception to our last and dying breath our purpose the very reason for our existence is to bring glory and honour and praise to God.

That is why you live. That is why we breathe. Our life is to reflect and display the majesty the beauty and the glory of our creator God.

the formation of a baby in the womb the birth of a child is to display the power and the might and the excellence of an amazing God.

In fact God gave us physical life that we might know him love him and enjoy him.

[22 : 28] God chose us in Christ before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

In love he predestined us to be adopted as his children through Jesus Christ in accordance with his pleasure and will. Before you and I were even conceived before the creation of the world before God spoke light into the darkness God knew us and loved us.

Before our unformed body saw the light of day God valued and treasured us. He gave us physical life so that we might grow to know him reflect him and display his glory to the world.

Jeremiah the prophet knew this. God speaking to Jeremiah said this before I formed you in the womb I knew you.

Not just I knew about you but I knew you relationally. Before you were born I set you apart. I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.

[23 : 58] God's purpose for our life begins before our very life begins. As David reminds us in Psalm 139 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. Before we even breathe, before our very conception, our life is planned, governed, designed by God.

Every second of your life, every minute that we live is all ordained by God. We live today with the purpose of bringing glory to the God of life.

That is why you have breath in your lungs today. But God also commands do not kill.

In Exodus, God gives us the command, you shall not murder or you shall not kill. Murder or the violent intentional killing of another person is always wrong and never tolerated.

[25 : 37] This isn't talking about war, it is talking about the intentional taking of an innocent life. Expanding on this very command, Jeremiah spoke against those who acted unjustly towards the most vulnerable in society.

This is what the Lord says, do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor, the one who has been robbed.

Do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place.

To take the life of the unborn is to shed innocent blood. It's to murder. It's to kill.

Practically every abortion is carried out after eight weeks. At eight weeks, no more than 20 millimeters long, my facial features continue to develop.

[26 : 51] I have a rudimentary nose with nostrils and my jaw is fusing to shape my mouth in which I have a tongue. My eyes are open and my inner but not outer ear is developing.

Most of my internal organs, heart, brain, liver, lungs and kidneys have developed in a basic form.

My arms are longer and project straight forward and my hands can bend at the wrist.

I am sensitive to touch. Abortionists choose eight weeks and older because it is simply easier to do.

The baby is more visible and it becomes less complicated. But if God has created all life, if God sustains all life, if God values all life, if God has a purpose for our life, what right have we to take

this life?

What right have we to end the life of an unborn child? Who are we to decide mere mortals that we are, who lives and who dies?

[28 : 11] No one has the authority to maim or dismember limb by limb or to stop the heart beating by some lethal injection while still in the womb or induce birth and gradually let the still developing baby breathe out.

It is not my body, it is not your body, it is a gift from God. Our government does not have the right to decide who lives and who dies.

Our laws do not have the right to make the killing of an unborn child legal. We are not God. We do not get to make up the rules.

We obey the rules because God, the Lord of life, commands it. But this God of life, the God who creates, sustains and values and gives purpose to life, and the God who commands do not murder, is the God who responds.

in grace. Abortion is always wrong, and it is a terrible evil. However, in response to the killing of unborn children, God offers grace.

[29 : 47] Incredibly, the creator and the sustainer of all life has been born into this world. John 1, 14, the word, the word that spoke creation into existence, the word that sustains and controls all things, the word became flesh flesh, and made his dwelling among us.

Philip Yancey writes, the God who came to earth came not in a raging whirlwind or in a devouring fire.

Unimaginably, the maker of all things shrank down, down, down, so small as to become an ovum, a single fertilized egg, barely visible to the naked eye, an egg that would divide and re-divide until a fetus took shape, enlarging cell by cell inside a nervous teenager.

God entered life. Malcolm Muggeridge, who was a journalist who since died but became a Christian in his later years, observed, and I quote, he says, in our day, with family planning clinics offering convenient ways to correct mistakes that might disgrace a family name, it is, in point of fact, extremely improbable under existing conditions that Jesus would have been permitted to be born at all.

Mary's pregnancy in poor circumstances and with the father unknown would have been an obvious case for an abortion. And her talk of having conceived as a result of the intervention of the Holy Spirit would have pointed to the need for psychiatric treatment and made the case for her terminating her pregnancy even stronger.

[31 : 58] Thus, our generation needing a saviour more, perhaps more than any other has ever existed would be too humane to allow one to be born.

And yet it was God's plan that the saviour would be born. Against all odds, the saviour, God almighty, became a human being in the person of Jesus Christ.

And he came into the world not to take life, but to give life. He came not to condemn, but to forgive. Jesus said, I tell you the truth, whoever hears my words, believes him who sent me, has eternal life, and will not be condemned.

He is crossed over from death to life. When Jesus came into this world, he walked this earth innocent of any crime, never spoke a hateful word to another human being, never acted unkindly to another person, valued every life as precious, but in love and grace, he came to take the blame and the judgment of God for every abortion that has ever taken place.

[33 : 41] As Jesus died on the cross, he gave up his life so that we might be forgiven for all the wrong things that I have ever done, the things that I have ever said, for every abortion that has taken place and for every thought of every abortion that might take place.

He came to take the judgment of God and offer life and forgiveness in its place. Through his resurrection, he now reigns as the Lord of all life.

And he lives today ruling and reigning, healing the brokenhearted, covering the guilt and the shame, restoring life, bringing wholeness, restoration and renewal.

He is reigning in heaven. And one day the risen Lord Jesus will come again and he will put all things right. Justice will be done and he will establish the new heavens and the new earth where there will never be the death of another one ever again.

Not for an old person, not for a young person, but life will reign and Christ will rule. May we as God's people speak this truth and may we and may kingdom speak this peace to die of another life .

[35 : 24] T living in the ■■■■ Europe and may we speak this grace to our society that seeks to