Is There Not A Cause

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Date: 17 January 2016

Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0:00] I would like you to turn in your Bibles this morning to Psalm 139 and follow with me as I begin reading! Psalm 139, verse 13-17.

For you form me, my inward parts. You knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works, my soul knows it very well.
My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance. In your book were written every one of them, the days that were formed for me. When as yet there were, there was none of them. How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more than the sand.
I awake, and I'm still with you. Let us pray. Father, for us, prayer is not a habit, but a glad expression of our complete confidence in you, for an admission of our frailty and our necessity for your enabling, both in my preaching of the Word of God and your dear people hearing it and applying it accurately and faithfully.
And so we ask that this morning, as we take your Word and we make it front and center in our thinking, that would also govern the way in which we live and act in the world in which you've placed us.
[2:20] We pray that we would be a people that do more than give lip service to the value of human life on this single Sunday, that our concern for the well-being of others, for the frail and the unborn, and those who are alive and occupy the time that you have planned for them during their life, would be marked by our sincere interest in seeing that not only do they enjoy the blessing of life, but also that they come to know Christ as their Savior.

We pray, Lord, this morning that the Lord Jesus is seen as the one and only hope that we have and the delight of our souls.
We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. This is the Sunday that we as a fellowship have laid aside, set aside, to think about the pro-life movement, in particular, in the light of the decision that was made by the Supreme Court of the United States back in 1973-74 to legalize abortion.
And in those years that have transpired from that time, it is estimated, and it depends on whose statistics you're relying on, that over 60 million babies have been murdered in their mother's wombs.
And in the days that have passed, it's become not that uncommon for that murder to take place not only in a mother's womb in the early stages of that child's development, but even outside the womb, if necessary, for the sake and preference of the woman who can claim that that is her decision, and our government supports that.
[4:23] The truth of the matter is, is that our day and age is not the only age in which the small infant, the frail, the innocent, has been abused and misused.

I was doing some reading last week about the subject of the way in which unwanted children, isn't that a horrible word to use, unwanted children?
But in the ancient world, one of the very, very common ways of managing child size prior to having the modern technology that we have in medicine, to care for a child that was born that the family decided was not going to be appropriate for them to raise, one of the things that was common, very common, was for the child to be exposed.
And the child was left, in some cases, in Roman culture, left in the marketplace, and it was picked up there, or left to die.
It was picked up, and that child was introduced to slavery or to prostitution as a very common means. In Roman law, actually, when a child was born, it was not a person in one sense until the

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father of the home actually reached down and picked the child up.
[5:49] Do you understand that? Had no name. It was not viewed as a citizen or a subject of the Roman government until the father actually did that.

And if the father did not reach down and pick up that child, it was then abandoned and left to die. If you read the Scriptures, you will find that child sacrifice was not uncommon in the pagan world, particularly in the Philistine culture.
And one of the things, if you're reading your way through the Scriptures, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, it talks about kings who allowed their children to be sacrificed to Molech.
I was curious as to how else children were disposed of, and I found out that there were a number of natural herbs and various toxic substance that a woman could take that could conceivably produce an abortion, or it could also cause her life to be at risk.
The modern medical procedure did not really come into popular use until actually surgical instruments were designed. You all wanted to know this, didn't you? I'm trying to help you here.
[7:05] Until modern surgical instruments came into being that allowed for a relatively safe medical procedure for destroying the unborn.

And we may not think of it as often as we should of how violent and how wicked and cruel the culture that we live in is.
The fact of the matter is is that the pro-life movement went to great lengths to secure some videos that were played throughout this last summer, and it caused quite a dust-up, didn't it?
I mean, Planned Parenthood was exposed as a murderous group of people. And yet, do you realize realize that most of the noise of that event has passed into the rearview mirror and people don't even think about it today?
I mean, thankfully, Powerball is over as well, and so that's gone too. But, you know, given all the different things that occupy the buzz in our culture, what happened this summer with those Planned Parenthood videos and the exposure, it's gone.
[8:21] It's gone. A great deal of insensitivity has taken its place. I read something interesting about World War II when President, when General Eisenhower heard about Auschwitz and Treblinka and the other death camps that put to death some three million or so Jews.

He insisted that, number one, that the army sent in videographers, cinematographers that would take pictures of all the detail of what was happening in the camps.
Here's why he said they should do that. He said, within a generation, many will deny that it ever happened. He made the citizens of the German towns and cities close to those places of murder, he made them walk through the camp and he made them bury the bodies.
And he said, I want this generation to remember just how cruel and indifferent it has been to the value of life.
And I will tell you this morning as I began studying several weeks ago regarding this matter, I talked to Pastor Saul earlier today. I said, you know what? I think this is the first time I've preached on the pro-life movement for several years because Pastor Saul, somehow or another, well, the truth is I went deer hunting during this time.
[10:02] And so Pastor Saul would preach. And I have to tell you that as I began studying and praying about this, I found my heart convicted convicted for allowing this subject to become less important in my prayer and my thinking than it deserves to be.

And I would venture to say that I am not entirely atypical in that the sanctity of human life, which is foundational, can become something of less significance just because we allow all other kinds of things to occupy its space.
I remember a friend from Emmanuel Baptist Church calling me up and saying, we are having a great deal of trouble finding board members for the pro-life movement. So what I'd like us to do this morning is start at the beginning.
And I want you to think with me of some things that I have no doubt the vast majority of you here are in principle fully persuaded of. But here's the truth.
The things that we do not consciously and deliberately think about carefully can become unimportant and diminished in their value and less influential in our behavior than they should be.
[11:43] And so when we start thinking of our view of life and framing it properly, we have to begin with God. And so allow me to flesh this out for you by saying, first of all, our view of God governs our value of life.

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Our view of God governs our value of life. What we sincerely believe about God ends up affecting every part of our thinking and ends up determining the way in which we behave.
Now, if you remember, kind of don't go back on the screen, but there was a little phrase I put as the title of the sermon, is there not a cause? God's love. That phrase actually comes from a passage in 1 Samuel 17, verse 29, in the King James Version, in which David, as a young boy, comes into the camp of Israel, who is engaged in battle with the Philistines, and every day there is this gargantuan tower of a man that comes out and kind of mocks Israel.
Remember that? He's kind of putting a smackdown on these poor Israelites who are scared to death to go to battle with him. And David hears this guy ranting and he's a little irritated.
And he says, well, say, hey, what's going to happen to the guy that trashes him and kills him? Oh, well, he's going to get tax-free benefits, blah, blah, blah. And so, you know, David says, well, I'll do it. Right?
[13:10] And in the ESV, it talks about his brothers get on him. Well, actually, in all translations, it talks about his brothers. You just came down here because you wanted to see blah, blah, blah. And David, I like the King James, David says this, is there not a cause?

In other words, you guys are sitting here listening to Goliath smack our God around and some of you don't seem to care about it. I care. I'm going to go do something about it. And so, this morning, I want you to understand that the way we see God ends up influencing the way we behave.
So when we think about the pro-life movement, let's start by recognizing all human life from conception to old age and the grave is precious because mankind was created by God and for His glory.
I want you to look at a passage, if you will, in Colossians 1, verse 16. Go to Colossians 1, verse 16. Why is it that we, as believers, put the value that we do on life?
Here's why. For one, it says, For by Him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities, all things were created through Him and for Him.
[14:41] The one who created us is the one that we belong to. Over in Revelation chapter 4, it says something very similar to that.

It says that we, you and I, and all created beings exist for His glory. I was thinking earlier this week of the fact that one of the things that we find in the book of Job and connect it with a passage in Jeremiah, in Job it refers to the fact that Job, along with all the others there, were just a pinch of clay in the hand of God.
How many of you ever did artwork in school? Remember? the art, I remember art, and the art teacher would say he had mixed up this mass of clay.
He'd say, why don't you guys, you go get a lump of this and make something with it? I've got to tell you, when my lump was finished, it looked much like what had come out of the little pile there.
It really did, it was still a lump. But when God takes the lump or the pinch of clay, as it says in Job, it says, He's the one who frames it and forms it.
[15:50] He makes you the way He made you and He was the one who created you. I like what it says in the passage in Jeremiah talking about the potter's house and then in the book of Romans it says, does not the potter have authority and power over the clay?

He made me. He has the right to determine the frame of my life, the length of my days, and the day of my home going.
And so when we think about how our view of God influences our value of life, we start out by recognizing, hey, He's the one who did it, made me the way I am, and I belong to Him.
Furthermore, we understand that all human life from conception to old age in the grave is precious because God made mankind to be His image bearer and the overseer of His created world.
We are made in the image of God and as a result of that, we are here to represent Him. All human life from old age, conception, the grave is precious and God reserves the right of life and death to Himself alone.
[17:10] He is the giver and He's the taker of life. Over in Psalm 31, verse 15, it says, My times are in your hands. My times are in your hands.

Let's look at another passage, if you will. You're in Colossians, but turn back and we're going to skip around a little bit today as we kind of look at the broad frame in which the Scriptures lay the sanctity of human life.

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Turn to Deuteronomy chapter 32, verse 39. Deuteronomy chapter 32, verse 39. See, now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God beside me, I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal, and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.
God, God alone, is the giver and taker of life. Ever since sin entered the garden and Satan tempted Adam and Eve to think that they could usurp God's rightful place, men have committed the most horrible of crimes against one another and particularly against the innocent and the weak.
human history is filled with murder and the horrible abuse of power. And I want to tell you that in every case, in any case, when mankind ultimately turns its back on God's moral law, it invariably begins the slow descent into the pit and suffers the consequence of its rebellion against God's value system and structure.
[18:54] I did not know or I did not think when I was younger that I would live long enough to see God's judgment beginning to play out on this nation.

But I think I am. I think I am. And I think one of the principal reasons why that is playing out has to do with the value that God places on human life.
I remember back in the 70s when abortion was legalized, one of the statements that was floating around in the 70s and 80s is that if God did not judge America for its attitude towards abortion, He would have to apologize to Germany for what He did for the mistreatment and slaughter of the millions of Jews.
I am not at all surprised by the diminution that I see in American culture and I got to tell you that the answer is not in, can I say it slowly so you don't miss it, it's not in Washington.
And I would make an appeal to you who become quite irritated with what's going on in Washington, let me encourage you to understand that the solution will not be political, it will be spiritual.
[20:17] spiritual. And you would be well served to put more energy into the spiritual well-being of the people around you rather than everything else.

Sixty million plus babies slaughtered. And the thing that really strikes me, really strikes me as I stop and think about how quickly the Planned Parenthood videos came and went and how little they really stirred this country.
Another thing that I want you to understand is that our view of God controls our actions. As we take up this second point, let me be clear that actions flow from thinking and values.
The way in which you act ultimately tells me what you value and what you think. You got that? What you value and what you think. I lost track of the number of times I've heard people tell me that they were saved.
In fact, I had a conversation on Thursday and another conversation on Saturday in that same vein of, oh, absolutely, I'm saved. In fact, I believe the teaching of the Scripture is this, is that once a person comes to faith, they don't lose their salvation.
[21:59] I agree. But let me tell you something. One of the undeniable blessings of genuine conversion is that it changes the way you are and it changes the way you think.

And we who are here bear testimony to that. Now, we're not where we want to be, but anyone who is genuinely converted can look in the rearview mirror and say, and I'm not who I used to be.
And so when a person says to me, oh, I'm a believer and I'm saved and I am so very thankful for what Jesus has done in terms of my eternal destiny and the certainty I have in heaven, my question also follows, and what difference is he making in your life today?
The way we act does not earn us a right relationship with God. A right relationship with him does drive right actions. in fact, apart from right actions, there really is good reason to question the authenticity of a person's profession.
Does that make sense? If I don't see, hey, if I don't see in my life the evidence of progressive sanctification and the power of the Word of God enabled by the Spirit of God bringing about slow and progressive change, I'd like to change quicker, but I can look back and see I'm not who I used to be.
[23:37] And so when we think about this business of the fact that our view of God really does control our actions, recognize Jesus put us on the spot with something he said over in Matthew 7, verse 21.

Not everyone that says to me, Lord, Lord, what? It's going to enter the kingdom. It is an interesting thing to recognize how much of the pro-life movement is driven by people of faith across the broad spectrum.

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I read a very interesting comment by Moore. Pastor Andrew, where are you? You're out there somewhere. Raise your hand, Pastor Andrew. Russell Moore, is that correct?
The Southern Baptist theologian? Thank you. I was right. Mark that down. Russell Moore said this. He said, I would like, he put it this way, I would not like to see any fewer rosaries at a pro-life movement rally, but I would like to see more evangelicals at one of them.
Do you know what he meant? How many of you understand? Raise your hand if you understand what he said. I'll say it again slowly so you understand it. In other words, he was saying if more evangelicals took this matter of the pro-life movement more seriously, it would put their profession of faith into evident practice.
[25:11] I was convicted this week. as I thought back to how my own affection and concern for the pro-life movement has waned to some degree because of focus on other things.

It's a shameful thing for me to say that. And it's a little frightening for me to admit that moving forward Tim Knoyer is convicted by the Spirit of God that he needs to be more active.
When we think about the pro-life movement, we recognize that most of the effect of a right view of God has not been with letters and phone calls and marches.
the greatest effect has been with kindness and evidence of mercy and interest in the lives of those that are deeply afflicted by sin's unintended consequences.
I was humbled to see the crowd that was here Saturday doing blankets. blankets. But I would appeal to you don't make it a once and done deal.
[26:41] How many of you understood what I said? Your heart, if it is touched by the value of human life, engages to do that.

it's not just a matter of doing blankets. It's a matter of volunteering at the Maternity Resource Center.
It's a matter of offering to help with prenatal medical care. It's a matter of showing personal interest in those that are caught in the snare.
It is a willingness to invite people into your home and invest in their lives. And can I tell you something? Everybody listen carefully. There is no piece of ministry that isn't messy.
Even if you limit your ministry to people in this congregation, the truth of the matter is, is once you step past the hellos in the lobby, every one of us has baggage.
[27:52] Ministry means you're going to be involved in carrying baggage. And so I would plead with you that if you are convicted that your view of God demands action, that you understand that means that you find ways to get invested in what is going on around you and in the lives of people that are hurting and you spend some of your energy doing things that count forever.

together. I love what James chapter 2 verse 26 says. I'll just read it to you. It says, for as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith from works is dead.
Hey, if you have the faith, it ends up in a tangible evidence that you can kind of put your finger on and say, yeah, yeah, yeah, this is why I'm doing that, because of what I believe. It's our faith in Christ that leads us to care for the unborn.
It's our faith in Christ that leads us to be invested in the lives of other people. It's our faith in Christ, listen to me carefully, that makes us willing to keep on being spent in doing things that count forever.
So let me conclude with some practical ways to honor God in the pro-life picture. Make the pro-life issues part of your personal prayer life.
[29:19] Can I tell you something? One of the things that I've learned is that the things I pray about consistently invariably end up kind of consuming oxygen in my life. Do you understand that?

Say it again slowly. The things I really pray about pretty consistently end up consuming oxygen. I do them. All you have to do is ask Tim Knoyer, hey, are you praying for opportunities to share the gospel?
And guess what? When I'm doing it, guess what happens? Bada, bada, bing. I have opportunities. I don't go out trolling West Broad Street, but it happens.
Okay? When you're praying about something, over time, God brings those prayers into fruition. You pray according to the things that Scripture instructs us in and he brings them about. Maybe not as fast as you'd like, but they're there.
Secondly, recognize that your life and daily testimony speak volumes. Do you realize that? Your testimony and your life speak volumes.

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[30:28] And if you're, I'm going to go slow here so you don't miss me. If you're kind of a bristly, prickly, easily offended person, people who have lots of baggage in their life don't want to get anywhere near you anyway, right?

Do you follow that? Do you know what I'm talking about by a person that's easily offended? The best place to find out if a person's easily offended is here, right?
You follow what I'm saying? How many of you know? No, I won't go there. Okay. You know, hey, listen, if we can't kind of suck it up and be adults here, why would we go outside and decide we're really going to be kind and generous and sympathetic and invest our lives in the well-being of broken lives, right?
I mean, some of us are once and done. I did speak to them once, and they did not return the favor. I guess I'm going somewhere else.
Okay. Yeah. I wonder how that's going to work with other people with broken lives. So, your life and daily testimony speak volumes. I'm reminded of what it says in Titus chapter 2, verse 10, that our lives can adorn the doctrine of God.
[31:44] When we act like Jesus acts and like Jesus treats us, do you know that other people figure it out? Right? Right? If you're a grumpy, frumpy person at work, nobody's going to be coming to you and dumping their garbage next to you and asking you to help clean it up.

On the other hand, when we are not living our lives for the Lord Jesus Christ, here's what it says in Romans chapter 2. It says, we cause the name of Christ to be blasphemed. Huh? So, your life is a daily testimony.
Another thing is let your good works and charitable spirit reflect the heart of your Savior. Why do you act the way you do? Do you realize that when the waitress gets the order wrong, you have an opportunity to act like Jesus?
Do you understand that? I mean, do not have a little meltdown because they didn't get you your hamburger done just exactly the way you want. I'm not paid for it.
You know, it's like, thank you, Jesus. Okay? Let your good works and charitable spirit reflect the heart of your Savior. Matthew chapter 5, verse 16, let your good works so shine before men.
[33:06] Hey, you can all recite the verse, but do it out there. Be supportive. engage in the pro-life movement.

Engage in the pro-life. By the way, I don't know the number over the manual, but I guess you could Google it or you could go to PDHC. What does that stand for? PD. Pregnancy distress.
Stand up and say that, please, Margie. Pregnancy decision health. Thank you. Okay? Or you can go to the Maternity Resource Center. I hope that, here's the deal. If I preach and it doesn't make a difference in your life, then part of my prayers have not been answered.
Does that make sense? Oh, really? Really? Okay.
It's hard being me. It's messy, too. Okay, here we go. I got more points. Be a supporter and encourager of adoption. Huh?
[34:15] There are abandoned babies all over the world. I don't care where you get one from. I really don't. But we as a congregation ought to be supportive of that.

A lot. Finally, look for gospel opportunities to every hand. What I mean by that is that, hey, listen, the best thing that ever happened to Tim Knoyer is Jesus saved me.
I haven't gotten over that yet. I wonder if you have. Here's the deal. The things that really make a difference in our life, we end up talking about.
Do you realize that? Isn't that true? Huh? I was into Giant Eagle again and had to get a Home Depot credit card or gift card so I could get gas in my truck.
You know how it goes. And anyway, I go up and without me participating, the girl at the front desk tells me about Powerball. It's gone. It's done. Somebody else has got their life trashed as a result of it.
[35:28] But the world is kind of sucked up on this Powerball thing, right? You know? Hey, listen, smile. We talk about what we think is important, right? And Powerball is not it.

It's Jesus. It's Jesus. I had someone talk to me about evangelism.
And I said, you know what? One of the most encouraging things about evangelism in Maranatha is most of it doesn't happen here. I like that. Most of it happens where you're bumping into hurting people, left and right.

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They're all out there, right? God hired you to go to places to work where people have broken hearts. God put you in neighborhoods where the wheels are coming off.
God put you into environments where people's lives are not what they should be and they know it. And you have the privilege of saying to them, guess what? I want to introduce you to the one who made all the difference in the world for me.
[36:37] That's Jesus. I'm not in favor of evangelism as a drive-by shooting event. I am in favor of just living it.

And what I mean by that is not kind of walking around with a super silly grin on your face, but praying about opportunity to share the gospel and let people know that, man, you know what it's like to be hurting.
And you know who the answer is. It's Jesus. He came into the world to save sinners. He came into the world to satisfy the debt that our sin and the judgment that our sin deserves.
He died on the cross in my place and in your place and he offers salvation to whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord. And so the pro-life issues, abortion, broken homes, abandonment, is just a window through which we get to step and say, come meet the one who loves me and died for me and rose again and in whose name I have confidence forever.
Let's close in prayer. Our Father, we are thankful that you delivered us from bondage and darkness into light.
[38:09] We're thankful that you have called us to be your on-site representatives in a broken world. And certainly, the area of what is taking place in the world today in relationship to the unborn deserves our conscious and deliberate passion.

not as the single event of life but as an evidence of the fact that people need Jesus. Let us be a people that are marked by mercy because we receive mercy.
Let us be a people that are engaged in that which lifts up the value of human life because it is precious to you. And let our lives speak volumes to a broken world that needs Christ.
And we pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen. Let's stand together as...

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