

The Sanctity of Human Life

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] Thank you.

As we are singing or as you are listening to a sermon or whenever something's going on in the context of worship that you're cross-referencing, you're stopping to ask yourself what passages of Scripture are coming to mind.

How many of you are working at that? Raise your hand high so I can kind of... Okay, here's what I want you to do. Just so I can get a picture of what it would look like someday.

I want everybody to raise at least one hand. Some of you are perverse and are going to raise both just a minute. Raise your hand, please. Now, I know some of you have never raised your hand before ever this moment.

And so it's kind of like you're having a little fit of apoplexy here and you're not sure that you're going to survive it. But here's what I want you to do. Beloved, I plead with you. I ask you. I want you to be a people that are biblically informed.

[1 : 26] And I want you to be a people that think scripturally. And you're not going to do it if you don't practice it. Number one, you have to know the Word. That's what your personal devotions and daily time in the Word of God are all about.

Amen? Well, that's not bad for Baptists, but it's good. Okay. You know, you have to be in the Word on a regular basis. But then secondly, you have to discipline your mind to think scripturally.

What saith the Scriptures? Where is it in the Bible? Particularly as we were singing those songs about God knowing us. How many of you were thinking about Psalm 139?

Were you there? Before I was formed in the womb, God knew me. And just when you were thinking about when God turned His face away, were you thinking about some of the things that Jesus said when He hung on the cross?

I want to make this appeal that, and I hope I don't become overly... My wife would tell you, once I get on something, I can nag to death. Okay? I've said to different contractors at various times, don't get on my call list.

[2 : 35] That means that I will call until you wish that I had died. And I want you to know that I'm going to keep at this, encouraging you. I want you to think scripturally. I want you, as we are singing and as we are studying, to allow the Spirit of God to use the Word of God to kind of cross-reference things so that you will encourage your heart to think biblically, not just when you're here, but at all times.

At all times. That's my plea. Second thing that I want to encourage you at the outset to do is to pray as the Word of God is preached. I was so blessed yesterday to have the privilege of doing the funeral for James Lewis.

And I have to tell you that there are some times where I am just rejoicing at the blessing of being able to preach the funeral for a believer and being able in that context to speak with confidence of where the individual is in eternity.

That's an exciting thing. Do you realize that? What does it say in Scripture? It says, absent in the body, present with the Lord. And that's good. When I slip from this place to my eternal home, it will not be a day of sorrow for me.

I look forward to seeing Jesus. There are times where you do funerals and most people there are not familiar with the gospel.

[4 : 00] And sometimes the sweetness of the gospel can actually be irritating. Did you realize that? It talks about the offense of the gospel. And I will tell you that as I preached yesterday afternoon, that one of the thoughts that went through my heart as I stood there to preach the sweetness of the truth that Jesus came into the world to save sinners such as I, I thought about the fact that there

were those of you who were praying for me.

I know that because you told me. And I was blessed and encouraged by that. So please don't stop. Sunday morning, here we are. I need your prayers again.

Same, same. Right? And I want to encourage you to know this, that praying is what makes average preaching a little more tolerable. So do your part and I'll do my part and we'll trust God to do His part. Amen? Now, this is Pro-Life Sunday.

Forty years ago, our Supreme Court declared that it was legal to murder the unborn.

And the value of human life was reduced from a matter of moral law to simple desire. The value of human life was reduced from a matter of moral law to a matter of simple desire.

[5 : 17] Let me explain what I mean by that. If the woman desired to keep the child, it was human and it was illegal for that child's life to be taken. If, on the other hand, the woman decided that she did not want that unborn child, it was acceptable to snuff that child's life out and there were no consequences for that murderous behavior.

In the 40 years that have followed in our nation alone, 40 years from that January 22, 1973 date, it is estimated that more than 55 million babies have had their lives snuffed out.

Does anybody know here how many died during the Vietnam War? Just rough numbers. Give or take, Pete, I see a nod, so that's, you're going to tell me about 55, 57,000, am I right? Okay, okay. Do you realize the trauma that the death of 55,000 men had to our nation? And yet we realize this morning that in this United States, only here in the United States, some 55 million babies have had their lives snuffed out.

And we're not here today to celebrate that event, but we are here as God's people to say this is wrong, and we as God's people have a place and a part to play in the way in which we react in an unbelieving world and the way in which we look around and behave in such a fashion that we are more than just kind of bumps out there on the road, but we are salt and light.

[6 : 58] Over the years, I have preached on the topic of the sanctity of human life. I've lost track of how many times. And I have, in each case, touched on the biblical framework for understanding that abortion is a sin.

It is a sin that God forgives when there is repentance and a contrite heart. But abortion is a sin and euthanasia is a sin. And I've got to tell you that I have no doubt that as things progress in our enlightened culture that we are going to see euthanasia take place more and more and more, particularly as the cost of health care becomes more problematic.

Guess what's going to happen? Once individuals reach their valuable, they kind of age out. And, you know, why do we have to have them keep around? I expect that it's going to become some of you sitting here that are younger than probably 30 are going to find that it's an ongoing battle. Ongoing battle. And so this morning, I'm going to touch again on those subjects. I'm always amazed when I preach on a subject that I've preached on year after year. I have individuals come to me and say, Pastor, never heard you talk about that before.

And in some cases, they're brand new to our fellowship. And I have to nod and say, well, yeah, I understand that. But the ones who really kind of get me are the ones who have been here for, you know, like 11700 years.

[8 : 14] And when they say that to me, I think, don't say anything. You know, why say anything? I say, well, I'm glad it touched your heart. Good answer, right? And so it might be that some of you here this morning, this is going to be the first time you've ever heard me say anything, at least in record, on the matter of the pro-life issues.

I do want to explain that this year I'm going to take and go a little further in terms of the practical application because I think we as a culture need to be sensitive to how far reaching the issue of the sanctity of human life really is.

So let's start with the very beginning. I want you to understand why God cares about human life. Why does God care? Well, turn back in your Bible just for a moment back to Genesis 1, verse 26. Genesis 1, verse 26. By the way, just as a matter of Bible study, I do want you to know that the book of Genesis, which is the starting book in the Scriptures, is also a book that has a lot of the beginning points in theology.

And so when you get the picture in Genesis, you can move forward fairly comfortably and understand how the rest of it flows. It's good to get the starting point right. So in Genesis 1, verse 26, here's what it says.

[9 : 33] And God said, let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heaven, over the livestock, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

So God created man in his image. And in the image of God, he created him. Male and female, he created them. I want you to understand that the reason God cares about human life is principally or at first from the Scriptures because he made it and he made mankind to be in his image.

I want you to understand as we look at the passage, if you'll notice there, it says we create man in our image, in our likeness. And in stating that it is in our likeness, we're not talking about the characteristics of God that are not seen, but we're talking about those characteristics that are seen. God created us with a will and with a mind and with an ability to love, an ability to create. These are things that he has given to us by virtue of being like him.

But I want you to look on, if you will, just a little bit more and say, and let them have dominion.

When he created mankind, he also gave to mankind the duty of being his administrative head over his creation.

[10 : 56] He made mankind to have the responsibility of caring for the world that he has given to us. And I want you to understand that long before it was popular to be sympathetic and sensitive to what our personal behaviors were doing to the earth, God ordained that we are to take good care of it.

There's a reason for Christians being responsible in the way in which they manage the resources that they've been given to them. And the reason is, is that God holds them responsible for it.

And so I want you to understand that he gave to man not only his own image, he also gave to man the responsibility of being his administrator, his overseer of the world that he had placed man in.

And so I want you to note that in a sense, to be against the image of God is to be against the one who was the maker of mankind. And to violate the image bearer, that is me, that is you, is to violate or disrespect his authority and his sovereignty as the creator and Lord over all of the universe.

To violate or destroy the image bearer is to rebel against the one that God has ordained to be his assistant and the one who maintains and manages the earth for his care or for his glory.

[12 : 15] I want you to notice, secondly, that God cares about human life because he alone is the one who is the giver and taker of life. Turn in your Bible to Job. We're going from Genesis all the way over to Job, and there is some thought that actually Job was the first book written historically.

I don't know exactly if that's true or not, but Job chapter 1, if you'll mark what it says in verse 21.

Here is Job enduring the incredible consequences of seeing those that he loved die.

And as he is going through the trauma of that. And I want you to understand, it would help you just to stop and think about just for a moment what would it be like to have someone come running up to you and say, listen, I want you to know that all of your family was slaughtered today by wicked and ungodly people.

What kind of thoughts would you have? Listen to what Job has to say in verse 21. He said, 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. I want you to understand that what the scriptures tell us is God is the one who has the right to take life.

[13 : 34] He's the one who gives life. And it is not in our hands as men or mankind to take away life that God has ordained. When He calls us into being and He makes us alive, we are to live our life until He decides that it's time for us to go home.

It's not our place to usurp His authority and His plan in our life. I want you to look with me also at some evidences of God's value for human life.

Mark, for one thing, that He pays personal attention to mankind. This morning as we were worshipping together in song, we looked at a passage in Psalm 8.

And I don't think John knew that I was going to reference it. But I want you to turn back there again, if you will. Well, John 8, we're in Psalm 8. Psalm, just a second.

It says there in verse 4, What is man that you are mindful of him, and the son of man that you care about him?

[14 : 50] Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of your hands. You have put all things under his feet.

I want you to understand that in broad terms, and we're thinking in a broad perspective, it says here that God, who is the creator of this universe, has decided that for His own sovereign glory and purposes, He would set His affection and His attention on us, and He would think about us personally.

That's amazing to me. I have 12 going on 13 grandchildren. And I care about them. I pray about them. But you know something?

My mind has a tendency to kind of focus on one thing at a time. How many of you are pretty much the same way? Let me have you practice basic discipline here. I want you to look clearly.

Focus on this finger. This finger. You got that? Focus on this finger. The truth of the matter is, is the human mind is pretty much limited to, well, I'll get that finger, Pastor, or I'll get this finger.

[15:56] I won't do both. And yet God has the ability to think of each of us and to care about us personally, and He is paying attention, as it says over in Psalm 139, to our down-sitting and our uprising.

He knows when I sit down. He knows when I get up. He knows what I'm thinking before I think it. Whoa! Now, my wife has said to me, I know what you're thinking. And I've wished on more than one occasion I could say, no, you don't.

But 42 years of practice, she's fairly close to the bullseye. But the truth of the matter is, is that God knows what we think before we think it.

That's God. Let me take this a little further and recognize that not only does He think about mankind in broad terms, but He thinks about us in personal terms.

Psalm 139, I just referred to it, but I want you to look at the passage so it's fixed in your mind. Turn over in Psalm 139 and look at verse 15 through 18. Psalm 139, verse 15, and then 18.

[17:06] My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in secret. At what time, at what point in the process of birth does a child become a human being?

In our contemporary culture, it's when the child is viable outside of the womb. That's not what God has to say. Look at what it says there in verse 15.

It says, God has known you from the moment of your inception, even before that, and He has called you precious and prized.

Well, I want you to see not only does He pay attention to us personally, but He also has given clear laws against the shedding of innocent blood. Now, turn over in your Bible, if you will, to Genesis chapter 9.

We're going back and forth this morning a little bit, but there's a reason for that. I want to make this clear in your thinking. Genesis chapter 9. You remember early on that we find not long after creation, we find murder taking place.

[18:34] And in that context, in verse 5 and 6, here's what it says. For your lifeblood, I will require a reckoning. From every beast, I will require it. And from man. What is that saying?

In God's wisdom, in God's economy, in God's law. And by the way, is God's law just some kind of arbitrary little set of rules that were passed by a group of people that lived in the ancient Middle East and kind of scampered around on the backside of the desert?

No. They're laws that are eternal, and they are for all mankind. God says, listen. Listen. Man's life is to be sacred and preserved. And he says, listen.

Lifeblood I will reckon from every beast and will cry it from every man. From his fellow man, I require a reckoning for the life of man. Whosoever sheds the blood of a man, by man shall his blood be shed.

So what is being said? The penalty for slaughtering another individual is your own death. That's what God ordained. Turn also, if you will, to Exodus chapter 20.

[19:40] I want you to look at this passage. And some of you, perhaps even in an earlier day, memorized the Ten Commandments. How many of you at one point had a reasonable run at getting the Ten Commandments right?

Raise your hand. Okay. Thou shalt not. We know those. Don't we pretty well? If we remembered it, we probably remember thou shalt not. Yeah, you said it.

Kill. Kill. Actually, the word that is used in Exodus chapter 20, verse 13, is not accurately or most accurately translated as kill.

It is most accurately translated as murder. Now, what's the difference between kill and murder? A lot of killing happens in war. A lot of killing happens in war. Where else does killing happen

justifiably?

Over in Romans chapter 13, it says this, that God has ordained civil government, and one of the things about the civil government is that they bear the sword.

[20 : 39] What's that talking about? Now, God has ordained that government in place where it is necessary to deal with lawbreakers may execute.

And so, I need you to understand as you think about the matter of the sanctity of human life that God has set some boundaries, and His clear laws are against the shedding of innocent blood. Innocent blood. The more accurate translation is thou shalt not murder. And as you look at that passage, I want you to understand that God has ordained that we are not to be engaged in the taking of the life of another individual.

And if I have a problem with someone, he's committed a crime against me, what is the standard of law? I am to appeal that case to the courts, and they're the ones who are to judge and adjudicate the matter.

And if the matter is a penalty of death, then they are the ones who are to care for it. I am not. That's not my place. What it says over in Romans chapter 12, it says this, vengeance is mine, what?

[21 : 42] I will repay. I want to come to a third part. He has established laws to preserve life and to protect it. He has established laws to preserve life and to respect it.

And I want you to understand that as we deal with this matter, there are some of you here perhaps who are not going to accept what I have to say. You may see it differently, and I respect that. But I want you to think with me at least scripturally.

We recognize that God values the life of the unborn. Over in Exodus chapter 21, and I'm just going to make reference to it so you have time to think and kind of frame it later in your mind.

But in Exodus chapter 21, verse 22 through 25, we find one of the more persuasive pictures of the value of the unborn child. It's giving a case where there is conflict going on, and the conflict is such that the woman who is with child is harmed, and she would give birth prematurely.

I'm giving you an abbreviated summary of the passage. If the prematurely born child survives, the Old Testament law called for the one who caused the harm to pay a penalty for causing that harm to the child and to the mother.

[23 : 00] Premature birth is not something that you kind of walk around in the morning thinking, well, today is a good day for this. No. Dangerous. Harmful. On the other hand, mark what it says there in the passage and look at it.

If that behavior by the perpetrator of that violence causes that woman to give premature birth to the child and that child dies, what is the penalty?

What's the penalty? It is death. What does that tell us? Going back to that Genesis chapter 9 passage where it says, those who take life will pay the price for that life.

And so we understand in the Old Testament that God set some boundaries around the unborn and protected them, and He establishes clear boundaries for the taking of human life. It's not something to be done carelessly.

It is not something to be done because of your anger or an attitude. It is only to be done in certain extreme situations. Establish laws to preserve and respect life.

[24 : 05] We also see that in the care of the aged. And we live in a culture that is progressively becoming more and more disinterested in what happens in the lives of elderly people.

They become, quote unquote, a burden and a challenge to a culture. And that's not true at all. I can tell you this from personal experience that one of the greater blessings of my later years, isn't later years an interesting thing to say at 64?

64? Now, some of you here are, you're in your 80s, you're thinking, why are you a pup? Well, here's the deal. I have learned more in ministering to my parents than I would have ever imagined.

They live next door to me. They're not here this morning, not by choice, but because their health is frail and they cannot come. I had to tell my dad last night, Dad, I don't think you should go.

Now, how do you think that is for a pastor to tell his father, who is a missionary, right? I mean, there's probably only two places my dad would rather be. It's in church or in heaven.

[25 : 05] Dad, I don't think you should go. Beloved, the scriptures are full of instructions on how we are to care for our elderly and we are to show respect for them.

That's the way we're to care for them. It's interesting also in the Old Testament to find that there was instructions on how you would care even for the body of someone who was executed. How

many of you know that a criminal, if he was hung for his offense, his body could not stay out overnight?

How many of you knew that? Have you ever stopped and thought, well, why was that? It was because of God's respect for the body that He had given and a desire that that body not be abused or mistreated in any extreme fashion.

The execution, the judgment was to be carried out, but the body was not to be abused. I heard, I read on the internet about a Marine that had violated, desecrated the body of some enemies and he suffered the consequences for that.

And I think that was a righteous judgment. Those who are engaged in warfare, apart from what takes place and the brutality and horror of warfare, that's understandable.

[26 : 18] I mean, munitions are profoundly destructive to human flesh. But let no soldier individually violate the body of a dead enemy. That is unconscionable and contrary to the Scriptures.

I want you to also recognize that I am, to understand that I believe the Scriptures teach that we have the responsibility of self-defense. And I recognize there are going to be some of you that may differ with me on this, but I want to tell you that I think when it says in the Scriptures that you shall not murder, it is speaking of the fact that there are instances where the matter of the taking of life is something that may be necessary.

And I think if you look in the Scriptures, there are clear limits set on where you go with that. Turn in your Bible, if you will, to Exodus chapter 22, verse 2. Exodus chapter 22, verse 2.

If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood guilt for him.

What's blood guilt? Now, you have resonating in the back of your mind Genesis chapter 9.

Remember what Genesis chapter 9 said? I will require his blood at your hand. Whoso kills, he shall be killed.

[27 : 35] Now, look at the passage carefully because we want to pay attention to the entire context. It says here, if a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood guilt for him.

By the way, how many of you have flashlights in your house? Raise your hands. Flashlight owners, wave at me. How many of you have a flashlight by your bed? Okay.

How many of you imagine what it would be like? Now, this is back in 2000 BC. Someone breaks into your house. Where's your flashlight? Hadn't been invented yet. Where's your oil lamp?

You scamper over to the hearth where there is this little smoldering pile of ashes from last night's suffer and you go, you know, get it a little bit of flame and carry it over there and light the lamp so you can figure out what's happening.

You got it? There's what it says. Let's look at it. It says, he breaks in, he's struck so that he dies, there shall be no blood guilt.

[28 : 37] Now, listen. But if the sun has risen on him, there shall be blood guilt for him. What's that mean? Very interesting. You can defend yourself.

But don't just apply the castle doctrine because you happen to think it's to your advantage. You better be very careful with it. Now, I want you to turn to another passage in relationship to this.

Turn to Proverbs 28, verse 17. I believe the scriptures clearly instruct me that I am to protect myself.

But I also believe the scriptures tell me that I better be careful with the application of that responsibility, profound responsibility. Proverbs 28, verse 17.

If one is burdened with the blood of another, he will be a fugitive until death. Let no one help him. How do you get burdened with the blood of another? You take the blood of someone that did not deserve to die.

[29 : 38] You take their blood without moral or scriptural authority. Let me have you think of some other passages in relationship to this. Turn in your Bible to Luke chapter 22, verse 35 and 36.

Very interesting text. You remember earlier when Jesus sent his disciples out two by two by two, he said, Hey, guys, don't be packing a pack. Don't take anything extra.

You're just to go from house to house. And in the nation of Israel, you're to preach the gospel. And the houses that accept you stay there. They kick you out, shake your dust off, move on.

Luke chapter 22, right before the cross, verse 35. He said to them, when I sent you out with no money bag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?

And they said nothing. He said to them, but now let the one who has a money bag take it, and likewise a knapsack, and let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. Huh.

[30 : 36] Different time, different need. And here is Jesus saying, look, you know, previously when you were only in the nation of Israel, the way in which the Israelites cared for itinerant evangelists was that every time they came to a city, they were welcomed into various homes in that city.

You didn't need to pack extra bedding or an extra sandwich because when you move from Rome Hilliard to Galloway, long journey that that is, you know, you could expect that in Galloway, someone was going to give you a place to live and a meal.

Now, going into all the world, carrying the gospel, and he says, listen, you're going to have to pack a knapsack, you're going to have to have the clothing that you need, and you're going to have to care for your own protection.

Now, lest we get overcarried with that, I do want to remind you of a couple other things in relationship to that. Later on, just a little bit further, we find that Jesus is in the garden, and Peter takes it upon himself to do something with a sword.

What's he do? He lops off a guy's ear. And what does Jesus do? He immediately heals the man on the spot, picks up the ear off the ground, slaps it, I don't know what he did, I'm sorry, you know, but, you know, it worked.

[31 : 57] I'm sorry. And then Jesus turns to Peter, who earlier he had said, hey, two swords will do.

You want to scratch your head for some things? He says, two swords will do, and then he says, Peter, hey, listen, those who live by the sword will die by the sword. Later, when Jesus is actually before the Sanhedrin, he makes a very interesting statement.

He says, listen, my servants will not fight. Why? Because my kingdom is not of this world. I think there is a difference in the Scripture from self-protection for personal protection, and the work of the church is not to be carried on by violence in any way, shape, or form.

Let me carry further on this, and I want you to understand that not only does he pay attention to mankind, and his laws are clear, but I want you to notice in Scripture that God has clear judgment against violence.

In Genesis chapter 6, and I want you to go back to that passage just for a moment. Genesis chapter 6, and I bring this to your attention because, listen to me carefully, we live in a profoundly violent culture.

[33 : 15] How many of you know what MMA is? Mixed martial arts. There are some of you that are going, I don't know, and there are others that, yeah, bring it on.

MMA, mixed martial arts. I'm sure none of you have things like Call of Duty or any of those kind of games that you play. You know, I see a little furtive, you know what a furtive glance is?

It's a little bit like you don't want to give it away, but you know what I'm talking about. Call of Duty. Listen, movies, movies are profoundly just offensive in their violent treatment of human life.

I want you to understand that God really cares about the culture and what's going on, and I have to tell you, I believe Christians are just, are largely insensitive to the violence of the contemporary culture.

Genesis chapter 6, let's look at verse 11 through 13. And God said to Noah, I have determined to make an end of all flesh. I'm sorry, verse 11. And the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence.

[34 : 27] Filled with violence. I'm not going to take the time this morning to run through all the various passages where the issue of violence is described in Scripture as something that is profoundly offensive to God.

But if you go back and you recognize that He made man in His image, then going about violently taking human life without justice is something that is supremely offensive to God.

Whether you're doing it in fact or you're doing it for entertainment, it's not part of the believer's life. And don't tell me that playing those games doesn't have an effect on your soul.

It is as empty an argument as telling me that pornography does not demean your value of women. Amen. As you look in the Scriptures, you find that there were two particular things that led to God's judgment on the Canaanites.

One was sexual immorality, and the other was violence. I'll give you a little bit of sidebar.

[35 : 39] That means it's something that's not in the sermon, but it's a little one. I believe that what we see happening in America right now with those who are in authority is largely God using an

instrument of judgment against this nation for our progressive wickedness.

Well, let's come to a close. What do we do? I want to talk about living with a commitment to the sanctity of human life.

Number one, I encourage you to be gospel-believing. And when I say gospel-believing, I want you to think with me of a passage that we're going to come back to in Ephesians 2, verse 8 and 9.

I love Ephesians, as you know, but I love this part in particular, and I want you to look at it just for a moment, if you will. We're going to study it again. We're going to look at it in depth, but let's look at what it means to be gospel-believing in terms of the context of where we are today.

Ephesians 2, verse 8 and 9, it says this, For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not of your own doing. It's the gift of God. Not a result of works, lest any man should boast.

[36 : 50] To be gospel-believing means to have had your life affected by the sweetness of the gospel and recognize that the reason you have had your life transformed is because of the power and grace of God.

You don't belong to yourself anymore. Would you agree with that? If any man be in Christ Jesus, he's what? He has a ticket to heaven, but he can pretty much be like the unbelieving world.

I don't see that. Gospel-believing means that the gospel has affected all aspects of your life. I would say, secondly, that we're to be gospel-living.

Gospel-living. Look at what it says there in verse 10 of Ephesians 6, For we are as workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works. Should there be a difference in the entertainment of the believer and the unbeliever?

Should there be an entertainment difference? I believe there should be. I think there should be.

There should be a difference in the kind of music we listen to, not just because we get off on being hyper-spiritual and walk around with our nose in the air.

[37 : 55] Agreed? But the things we care about and the things we're interested in should reflect in the way we spend our time. Try this. Tell your wife you love her, but you really don't care enough to be with her.

That's like people who say, Well, I love Jesus, but they don't have a devotional life, right? Or they say, I have my eyes focused only on you, but every time somebody else comes scampering by, clad in an inappropriate way, their eyes are off on the side paying attention.

No. Beloved, gospel living means that the Christ who has saved us makes a difference in the way we live.

Agreed? And I have to come back and touch on this. We're all about pro-life, and we're all about the sanctity of human life. Then if you really are about that, I would challenge you to rethink what is going on in our culture with the matter of violence that's taking place all over the place, that we're largely insensitive to.

Finally, I would encourage you this morning to be gospel practicing with a passion for the gospel and its power to bring people to Christ.

[39 : 08] How many of you know what the world looks like? It's ugly, isn't it? Lives that are broken by the unintended consequences of sin, the despair, the heartache, the disappointment. I'll tell you, yesterday, when I had the privilege of preaching the gospel to that group of people, I looked at a sea of faces that were dour.

Do you know what dour means? I mean, they smiled when I got started, but when I talked to them about the fact that there are eternal consequences for sin, it was like someone had dialed the lights down in that room.

I couldn't believe it. But, beloved, it's a truth. It's a truth. It's a truth. It says in Hebrews, it says, it's appointed unto man once to die, and what?

What happens after that? You're not just a bunch of ash that ends up nowhere. You are going to have an eternity, and it will either be in heaven or it will be in hell. Beloved, we ought to live our lives to reflect the sweetness and the glory of Christ, not with some self-righteousness.

Well, I don't play those kind of games. You know, that's not the issue. The issue is having a life that reflects gospel purity and having a life that reflects gospel passion.

[40 : 24] Then's when you make a difference. Today's the day that we, as good stalwart evangelicals, say we're against abortion.

Yeah, we are. I want you to know we're not doing very well because one of the latest polls came out and said for the first time the majority of Americans no longer believe that abortion is wrong.

And I don't know that the way in which we change that is by politics. It's one soul at a time. One heart at a time. And let me tell you something. The greatest credibility you have in witness is a life that is affected by the sweetness of the gospel. Wouldn't you agree with that? If you're talking one thing and living another thing, then people don't really want any of the thing you have. So I would appeal to you this morning that our lives display the power of the cross and the passion of the Lord Jesus and that we get about the business of being the salt and light in a putrefying world that desperately needs him.

[41 : 47] Let's close in prayer.