

SAVING THE UNBORN

By Andy Manning

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The title of this sermon is “Saving the Unborn.” This is week two of our sermon series called “Excel,” which is focused on our Christmas Offering. **2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)** “See that you also excel in this grace of giving.” To excel means to “to “be exceptionally good at or proficient in an activity or subject.” God wants us to be exceptionally good and proficient at giving. To be master-givers.

That’s what our Christmas Offering is all about. It is an opportunity to give over and above our normal tithes and offerings to some very special causes. This year our Christmas Offering is all about contending for religious liberty, saving the unborn, and reaching the world for Christ through missions. Today we’re going to talk about saving the unborn.

I am so thankful to live in the United States. I believe it is the best country in the entire world. But we’re not perfect (no nation is). We have a very strange law in America. “Strange” may not be the best word to use. It is illegal to kill a child outside the womb, but it is legal to kill a child inside the womb. The child can be the same age – eight months old, for example. In other words, it is legal to kill an eight-month old baby if it is still inside the womb, but if that same eight-month old baby is already born, then it is against the law (murder), to kill the baby. Outside the womb a baby has all the rights and protections of the law. Inside the womb it can be legally terminated. Outside the womb a baby is treated as priceless, the most important thing in the world. Inside the womb the baby is treated as if it is just a woman’s body part that she can choose to amputate and discard if she wants to. If a mother was to murder her newborn baby, she would be charged with murder; we would call her a monster. But it is perfectly legal and “respectable” for that same woman to kill her child before it is born.

The most common second trimester abortion procedure is called a D&E, which stands for dilation and evacuation. **Dr. Anthony Levatino** describes it this way: “A second-trimester D&E abortion is a blind procedure. The baby can be in any orientation or position inside the uterus. Picture yourself reaching in with the Sopher clamp and grasping anything you can. At twenty weeks’ gestation, the uterus is thin and soft, so be careful not to perforate or puncture the walls. Once you have grasped something inside, squeeze on the clamp to set the jaws and pull hard – really hard. You feel something let go, and out pops a fully formed leg, about 4 to 5 inches long. Reach in again and grasp whatever you can. Set the jaw and pull really hard once again, and out pops an arm about the same length. Reach in again and again with that clamp, and tear out the spine, intestines, heart, and lungs. The toughest part of a D&E abortion is extracting the baby’s head. ...” For this, the head is grasped and crushed with the clamps in order to remove it from the vaginal canal. In a nutshell, a D&A is when a doctor kills the baby by ripping it apart, piece by piece, with metal clamps. This procedure is perfectly legal in the United States. But if that same doctor was to try to do the same thing to a newborn child, we would charge him with murder and call him a monster.

In the USA, if a pregnant woman smokes and drinks, society condemns her and calls her a scumbag. If a pregnant woman aborts her unborn child, society praises her and calls her brave.

There's obviously something wrong with this picture. Our values and laws are highly inconsistent and contradictory. The only difference between an unborn child and a newborn baby is size, level of development, environment (location), and dependency. But there's a big difference between the size, level of development, environment, and dependency of a newborn baby and a five-year old child. That doesn't make the newborn's life any less valuable. If the law protects newborn babies, then it should also protect unborn babies. If our society believes that it is immoral and unjust to kill a newborn baby, then it should also believe that it is immoral and unjust to kill an unborn baby. That's what I want to talk to you about today.

Today, my goal is two-fold. First, I want to persuade you to become pro-life, both personally and politically. And second, I want to convince you to get involved in saving the unborn. To become so passionate about this issue that you become an activist.

THE STATE OF ABORTION TODAY

The first thing I want to do is to give you a little background on the issue of abortion. First, let's begin with some history.

On January 22, 1973 two cases made it to the steps of the Supreme Court at the same time. One case came from Texas, and the other from Georgia. Both cases challenged state laws that restricted abortion. The Texas case was called *Roe v. Wade*. Since the mid-1800s, abortion was illegal in Texas unless the mother's life was in danger. Roe was suing because she wanted to have an abortion, even though her life wasn't in danger. The Georgia case was called *Doe v. Bolton*. The state of Georgia only allowed abortion if the life and health of the mother was threatened, if the baby was seriously deformed, or if the pregnancy was a result of rape, and Doe didn't meet any of these requirements.

The Supreme Court ruled 7-2 in favor of Roe and Doe. The Roe decision made abortion legal for any reason during the first six months of pregnancy, and legal in the third trimester if the pregnancy threatened the health of the mother. But the Doe case defined "health of the mother" in such broad terms that a woman could have an abortion for any reason. According to Justice Henry Blackmun's majority opinion, a woman's health includes her "physical, emotional, psychological, and familial" well-being.

So where are we today? Let me quote from **Abort73.com**, a pro-life advocacy website. "As it stands today, American women have the legal right to obtain an abortion in all 50 states, through all nine months of pregnancy, for virtually any reason at all. This has been true since the Supreme Court declared that autonomous abortion rights are built into the Constitution, and that legal barriers to abortion are unconstitutional. This ruling was arrived at on the premise that the 9th and 14th Amendments, according to legal precedent established during the 1960's, guarantees a woman's "right to privacy"—a right that extends even to abortion."

Since 1973, more than 60 million unborn babies have been murdered in the womb. That's about 1.3 million every year. Over 3,000 unborn children are murdered every day, making abortion the leading cause of death in the United States, killing as many human beings as heart disease and cancer combined. To put it in perspective, in 2017 the suicide rate was higher than it has been in 50 years, with 47,000 people choosing to end their lives. But abortion kills that many children every 15 days. To put it in more perspective, in the history of the United States, going all the way back to the American Revolution, there have been 657,946 battlefield deaths (as of 2017). But there have been more than 60 million abortion just since 1973. For every American soldier killed in battle from 1775 to the present, there have been 91 abortions.

In 2014, about 19 percent of US pregnancies ended in abortion (almost one out of five). The places with the highest abortion rates are Washington D.C. New York, and New Jersey. In 2015, approximately 35% of all pregnancies in New York City ended in abortion. About 86% of abortions are by unmarried women. Among white women, about 10% of pregnancies end in abortion. Among black women, 28% of pregnancies end in abortion.

Why are women having abortions? The state of Florida records a reason for every abortion that occurs within its borders. In 2015 there were 71,740 abortions in Florida. How many were because of incest? .001%. How many were because the woman's life was endangered? .065%. How many were because of rape? .085%. How many were because the child was deformed? .66%. How many were because of social or economic reasons? 6.2%. That means in more than 92% of abortions, the woman's only reason for abortion was simply that she didn't want the baby.

THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF THE UNBORN

With the remainder of our time, I want to show you what the Bible says about the unborn. Here's the big idea: **The Bible teaches the full humanity, personhood, and dignity of unborn children.** In other words, according to the Bible there is no difference in the humanity, personhood and dignity of an unborn baby and a full-grown adult. Therefore, unborn babies deserve all of the protections privileges under the law that we get as adults.

1. The unborn are persons.

Everyone agrees that the unborn are human beings. But some make a distinction between a human being and a person. They say that while the unborn are human, they have not reached the state of personhood, and therefore can be killed. But the Bible makes no distinction between the terms "human beings" and "persons." They are one and the same. And the Bible teaches that the unborn are persons in the same way that adults are.

Psalm 51:5 "Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me."

The unborn are sinful from the moment of conception. Only persons can be sinful.

Isaiah 49:1 “Listen to me, all you in distant lands! Pay attention, you who are far away! The Lord called me before my birth; from within the womb he called me by name.”

Jeremiahs 1:4-5 “4 The Lord gave me this message: 5 “I knew you before I formed you in your mother’s womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations.”

Isaiah and Jeremiah both were called to the ministry of prophecy from their mother’s wombs. Only a living person can be called to a ministry

Luke 1:44 “For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me.”

John the Baptist leaped for joy when he was inside of his mother’s womb. The unborn can experience emotion. Only persons can experience emotion.

Luke 1:15 “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb.”

John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit inside his mother’s womb. Only a living person can be filled with the Holy Spirit.

It’s ironic. Some of the greatest injustices in history were justified by denying certain groups of people the status of “personhood.” The slave-holders said that slaves were not persons. The Nazis said that the Jews were not persons. The Communists said that their own citizens who rejected communism were non-persons. And now the pro-abortionists say that unborn children are not full-persons.

Some say that the unborn are not persons; they are only potential persons. That’s not true. The unborn are not potential persons. They are persons with great potential.

Dr. Seuss stated the Bible’s view on this issue in his children’s book *Horton Hears a Who*: “After all, a person’s a person no matter how small.”

2. The unborn are the product of divine intention and creation.

Psalm 139:13-16

“13 For it was you who created my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
14 I will praise you
because I have been remarkably and wondrously made.
Your works are wondrous,
and I know this very well.

15 My bones were not hidden from you
when I was made in secret,
when I was formed in the depths of the earth.
16 Your eyes saw me when I was formless;
all my days were written in your book and planned
before a single one of them began.”

God is the one who creates the unborn; He is in the womb with the child, knitting it together with His own hands.

In other words, unborn children are not merely the product of natural processes. Sure, God works through natural process to create an unborn child; but behind the natural processes are the intelligence, and power, and love of God.

The unborn are not accidents or mistakes. They are not surprises. Not to God. Unborn children are not the product of the will and passion of man. Every unborn child is the result of divine intention and creation. God made the intelligent, purposeful decision to create each and every child.

Acts 17:25 “25 and human hands can’t serve his needs—for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need.”

No life is possible without the supernatural work of God. So every unborn child is a work of God; a life that God wanted to create. And since every unborn child is the result of God’s will, then it is wrong to kill them.

3. The unborn are children.

Genesis 25:21-22 “21 Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The Lord was receptive to his prayer, and his wife Rebekah conceived. 22 But the children inside her struggled with each other, and she said, “Why is this happening to me?” So she went to inquire of the Lord.”

Some people prefer to use the word “fetus” for unborn children, because it makes it sound like an unborn child is different than a newborn child. The Bible makes no such distinction. When Jacob and Esau were still in their mother’s womb, the Bible referred to them as “children.”

Luke 18:15-16 “15 People were bringing infants to him so he might touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16 Jesus, however, invited them: “Let the little children come to me, and don’t stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.”

The word for “children” in this passage is *brephos*. The same word is used in Luke 1:41 to describe Elizabeth’s unborn child, John the Baptist, who leaped inside of her. By the way, Luke was a medical doctor.

So the point is that the Bible makes no distinction between children in the womb, and children outside the womb. They are all children. Abortion is not the killing of a fetus; it is the killing of a child.

I read recently that abortion does not terminate a pregnancy, birth does. Abortion terminates the life of a child.

4. The unborn belong to God.

Psalm 100:3 “Acknowledge that the Lord is God. He made us, and we are his—his people, the sheep of his pasture.”

The fact that unborn children are created by God, and not merely the result of human passion or natural processes, means that they belong to Him. He made them, and they are His. Therefore, we don’t have the right to destroy what belongs to someone else.

Ezekiel 16:20-21 “20 You even took your sons and daughters you bore to me and sacrificed them to these images as food. Wasn’t your prostitution enough? 21 You slaughtered my children and gave them up when you passed them through the fire to the images.”

Here God is condemning the nation of Judah for child sacrifice. And notice how He describes the children. In verse 20 God says that the children were “born to me.” In other words, they belong to God; God claimed them for Himself; He viewed them as His own children. And then verse 21 says “you slaughtered *my* children.” Unborn children are not the property of their mothers, or of the state. They belong to God. Just as we don’t have the right to kill someone else’s children, we don’t have the right to take the lives of God’s children.

5. The prohibition against murder includes the unborn.

Exodus 20:13 “Do not murder”

Everyone knows that the Bible condemns murder. And everyone agrees that murder, the taking of an innocent human life, is both immoral and should be illegal.

Exodus 23:7 “Stay far away from a false accusation. Do not kill the innocent and the just, because I will not justify the guilty.”

Proverbs 6:16-19 “16 There are six things the Lord hates—no, seven things he detests: 17 haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent, 18 a heart that plots evil, feet that race to do wrong, 19 a false witness who pours out lies, a person who sows discord in a family.”

But notice that when the Bible forbids the murder, it makes no distinction between the value of human life at different stages of development. It doesn’t forbid the murder of adults, but allow

the murder of children. It doesn't forbid the murder of men, but allow for the murder of women. The prohibition against murder includes all human beings, even the unborn. Unborn children deserve the full protection of the law.

6. God deeply cares for the unborn.

Psalm 139:16 "Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began."

God sees the unborn. He is watching over them.

Jeremiah 1:4-5 (NIV) "The word of the Lord came to me, saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.'"

God knows the unborn before they are conceived; before they are formed. God is the one who forms them in the womb. And God has a plan for them before they are born.

The unborn are not anonymous. They are not clumps of cells. When no one else knows that a child is conceived, God knows it. When no one else knows that a child is on the way, God knows it.

Isaiah 49:1 "The Lord called me before I was born. He named me while I was in my mother's womb."

God chooses a child's name when they are still in their mother's womb. Before anyone else knows what a child's name is going to be, God knows. Before anyone knows what a child is going to look like, and what their personality is going to be, God knows.

It is clear that God is intimately involved with the unborn; He is concerned about the unborn. He deeply cares for the unborn.

Amos 1:13 "The Lord says: I will not relent from punishing the Ammonites for three crimes, even four, because they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead in order to enlarge their territory."

Here God promises to punish the Ammonites because they killed unborn babies. Again, God deeply cares about the unborn. If the unborn are valuable enough for God to deeply care about them, then we should care about them, too.

7. God creates the unborn.

1 Samuel 2:6 "The Lord gives both death and life; he brings some down to the grave but raises others up."

Isaiah 44:24 “This is what the Lord, your Redeemer who formed you from the womb, says: I am the Lord, who made everything; who stretched out the heavens by myself; who alone spread out the earth.”

Who creates the unborn? God. God is the creator of every unborn child. And if He gives them life, then only He has the right to take their lives.

God is the rightful owner of every human being. He owns us because He created us. And He owns us because He died on the cross to save us from our sins. We have no right to destroy that which belongs to almighty God.

8. The unborn are created in God’s image.

Genesis 9:5-6 “5 And I will require a penalty for your lifeblood; I will require it from any animal and from any human; if someone murders a fellow human, I will require that person’s life. 6 Whoever sheds human blood, by humans his blood will be shed, for God made humans in his image.”

The Bible does not just forbid murder; it tells us why. Human beings are created in the image of God. Only human beings are created in the image of God. What does that mean? Nobody knows the full scope of what it means to be created in the image of God, but part of what it means is that human beings are created to be like God in certain ways that the rest of creation is not – in our intelligence, our personality, our morality, our creativity, our immortality, our capacity for communication and relationship, etc. Human beings are created to be images of God, pictures of God, and in this way to glorify Him. And because human beings are image bearers, they are infinitely more valuable than the rest of creation.

Psalms 8:5-7 “5 You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor. 6 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: 7 all the sheep and oxen, as well as the animals in the wild,”

God placed man in charge of the earth and all the animals. And God gave animals to man for his use – for food, for fun, and for work. Man is the apex, the zenith of God’s creation.

Matthew 10:31 “So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” **Matthew 12:12** “A person is worth far more than a sheep.”

Both of these statements were made by Jesus. The point is that human beings are not just highly intelligent animals. They are different than the rest of creation. They are part of creation, but they are made in the image of God. And this is why murder is forbidden.

But human beings do not become image-bearers at birth – after they are born; they are created in the image of God; they have the image of God on them from the moment of conception. And this is why it is unjust and immoral to kill the unborn.

Unborn babies do not become valuable when they are born. They do not become valuable because the mother values them, or because the mother decides to keep it. They are valuable because they are image-bearers of almighty God.

9. God has a plan for the unborn.

Psalm 139:16 “Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in your book and planned before a single one of them began.”

God had a plan for David before he was born.

Isaiah 49:1 “The Lord called me before I was born. He named me while I was in my mother’s womb.”

God had a plan for Isaiah before he was born.

Jeremiah 1:5 “I chose you before I formed you in the womb; I set you apart before you were born.”

God had a plan for Jeremiah before he was born.

Luke 1:15 “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother’s womb.”

God had a plan for John the Baptist before He was born.

Luke 1:31-33 “31 Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end.”

God had a plan for Jesus before He was born.

Galatians 1:15 “But when God, who from my mother’s womb set me apart and called me by his grace, was pleased.”

God had a plan for the apostle Paul before he was born.

From this we can conclude that God has a plan laid out for every unborn child, and abortion would be interfering with His plan.

10. The unborn are priceless.

Psalm 139:14 “I will praise you because I have been remarkably and wondrously made. Your works are wondrous, and I know this very well.”

King David is reflecting on the fact that God made Him, and he says that God’s works of creation are wondrous; that people are remarkably and wondrously made. Each and every unborn child is priceless.

Think about what an unborn child is. It has 60 trillion cells, 100 thousand miles of nerve fiber, 60 thousand miles of vessels carrying blood around the body, 250 bones, and countless joints, ligaments, and muscles.¹

The speed at which an unborn child develops is amazing. At conception, the child has a unique DNA code. Minutes after conception, the cells begin to separate. At 18 days after conception the heart begins to beat. At five weeks, the cerebral cortex starts to form. At 40 days, brain waves can be detected. At six weeks, the fingers and toes grow distinct. At eight weeks, all the organs are functioning. At nine weeks, the baby has distinct fingerprints that separate the child from every other person on the planet. At the 10 weeks the baby can feel pain. At 12 weeks the baby can smile.

Unborn children are priceless.

Psalm 127:3-5 (NLT) “3 Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. 4 Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior’s hands. 5 How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates.”

Children are a gift from the Lord, not a burden. Not just born children, but unborn children too. Every child was an unborn child at one point. Children are a gift, the Bible says. And the more you have, the more joy you will have in your life. Here’s a cure for depression: Have more babies!

People are having fewer and fewer children today, but the world has been blessed so much by large families.

- Joseph was the eleventh of twelve sons.
- King David was the youngest of 8 sons.
- I am the youngest of six children.
- Stephen Colbert is the youngest of 11.
- Mell Gibson is number 6 of 11.

¹ Believer’s Bible Commentary.

- Mozart was the youngest of 7.
- Celine Dion was the youngest of 14.
- Ben Franklin was the 15th of 17 children.
- George Washington was the 5th of ten children.
- John Wesley was the 15th of 19 children.
- Charles Wesley, the greatest hymn writer of all time, was the 18th of 19 children.
- DL Moody was the 7th of 9 children.
- Thomas Edison was the 7th and last child of his family.
- Dolly Parton is the fourth of twelve children.
- Michael Jackson was the 8th of 10 children.
- Mark Wahlberg is the youngest of 9 children.
- George Whitfield was the 7th child born to his parents.
- Jonathan Edwards was the 5th of eleven children, the only son.
- Charles Finney was the youngest of 9 children.
- Thomas Aquinas was the youngest of 8 children.
- Martin Sheen is the 7th of 10 children.
- Evander Holyfield was the youngest of 9 children.
- John Jay, Founding Father, was the youngest of 7 children.
- Zig Ziglar is the tenth of 12 children.
- JC Penny is the seventh of 12 children.

Imagine all the good that the world would have missed out on if these parents would have had an abortion, or if they would have chosen to have only one or two children.

And imagine all good that we have missed out on by killing 60 million children since 1973; and that's just

The Bible says that unborn children are priceless. They should not be destroyed.

11. The unborn must not be punished for the sins of their parents.

Deuteronomy 24:16 "Parents must not be put to death for the sins of their children, nor children for the sins of their parents. Those deserving to die must be put to death for their own crimes."

Some people say that abortion should be allowed in the case of rape or incest. No. The Bible says that children should not be punished for the sins of their parents. Rape and incest are horrible, and we need to minister to the victims of rape and incest. But we must not punish the unborn children. It's not their fault. They are precious, and they were created by God, and they deserve life.

12. The punishment for killing the unborn is the same for killing an adult.

Exodus 21:22-25 “22 When men get in a fight and hit a pregnant woman so that her children are born prematurely but there is no injury, the one who hit her must be fined as the woman’s husband demands from him, and he must pay according to judicial assessment. 23 If there is an injury, then you must give life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 burn for burn, bruise for bruise, wound for wound.”

According to the Bible, if two men are fighting, and one accidentally hits a pregnant woman and causes the baby to be born prematurely, then the man must be punished. If the baby is not harmed, then he must pay a fine. But if the baby is harmed, then the punishment is eye for an eye. If the baby dies, for example, then the man must be put to death.

This shows that unborn child’s life is just as valuable as an adult man’s life.

CONCLUSION

What was my goal today? To persuade you to become pro-life personally and politically. Why both? One time Vice President Joe Biden was asked about his position on abortion, and he said he was pro-life personally, but pro-choice politically. But that position makes no sense. If an unborn child is a human being, then abortion is murder. And if abortion is murder, then it must be outlawed in the same way that all forms of murder are against the law. Would you say, “I’m against murder personally, but I’m pro-murder politically?” Of course not.

Some people say that they don’t want to force their religious views on others. Abortion is not merely a religious view; it is a moral view. There are people of all different religions who are pro-life. And there are times when your moral views should be forced on others. Imagine if someone said, “I’m against child abuse personally, but I don’t want to force my views on others.” “I’m against rape and slavery and sex trafficking personally, but I don’t want to force my views on others.” That’s a ridiculous position.

What does it mean to be pro-life? It is to believe in the full humanity, personhood, and dignity of the unborn. It is to believe that abortion should be illegal for any reason, except when the mother’s life is in danger. At that point it is not abortion, but the decision between saving one life, or losing two lives.

My second goal for this sermon was to inspire you to become an activist. To become so passionate that you get involved in the fight for the unborn. How so? By voting only for strong pro-life politicians. By never having an abortion or encouraging an abortion. By praying for God to put an end to abortion. And by supporting crisis pregnancy centers that focus on convincing women who are considering abortion to keep their babies.