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What Makes Abortion Plausible? What Makes Abortion Unthinkable?, Part Three

Abortion makes sense to people who think that our existence is primarily about our rights - that we are human beings who stand on our own two feet, that we are autonomous human beings, that we are answerable to no one, that we are our own independent moral agents, and that we have the right to decide who will live and who will die.

Tuesday, January 27, 2009

The following is an edited transcript of a message preached by R. Albert Mohler, Jr. for "Sanctity of Human Life Sunday" on January 18, 2009. Today's installment is the third in the six-part series.

For us, abortion can never be merely an issue of controversy, an issue of public debate, an issue of some kind of public conflict. For us, it is far more than that. Abortion is an issue relating to the very glory of God and what it means to be human.

We are trying to go into that world in which abortion makes sense. And abortion can only make sense if human life is expendable. For abortion to make sense, individual life must be graded on some kind of scale - from life that is worthy of life, to life that is unworthy of life.



The Bible knows no such gradation. Every single word of Scripture rebels against such an idea. In the world of the Bible, every single human being and all life is sacred because of God. And every single human life is sacred because every single human being is made in the image of God. You see, in the Biblical world we come to understand that every one of us has dignity, not because in ourselves we deserve dignity, but because we are made by a sovereign, omnipotent, and holy God who made us in His image.

Every single human being is distinct from every other form of life because human beings alone are made in the image of God. And, as made in the image of God, we are distinct from the rest of creation.

We don't know everything the Bible means when it asserts so clearly that we are made in the image of God - male and female - but we do know that we are the *only* creature who can know the Creator. We are the only creature who can be in fellowship with Him. We are the only creature with a moral sense that cries out that there is a Creator who will judge us. We are the only creature that has a service of worship.

Every single atom and molecule of the universe cries out the glory of God. Every single animal cries out the glory of God. The tiger, being a tiger, declares the glory of God. The fish, being a fish, declares the glory of God. The spider, being a spider, declares the glory of God (believe it or not).

But no fish and no spider and no tiger has ever *spoken* about the glory of God. No tiger *knows* that he is made in the glory of God. There has never been a tiger that has reflected that kind of moral conscience. You have never seen a *National Geographic* special where the tiger in the jungle goes after his prey, seizes and eats his prey, and then goes back and says, "Whoa, I worry about myself, I'm too violent. I don't know where all that comes from! I look in the mirror and I am shocked at what I see!" No, the tiger does what he intended to do, and he feels absolutely no guilt about it.

We are different. You see, the Bible tells us that every single human being is made in the image of God and that means that every single human being was made for covenant and communion. Every single human being - no matter what ethnicity, no matter what skin color, no matter what age, no matter what stage of development - every single human being is made for covenant and communion.

What does that mean? It means that we are made to be in a relationship with God. It means that God makes us for his glory because He has a plan for us. Created for his glory, He intends for us to know Him. It is for glory because He wants to be known by us and he wants to be worshiped by us. It means that every single human being is made in God's image because - "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have life everlasting." We are made for covenant. We are made for communion.

Let us leave that world and go again into a world in which abortion makes sense. Abortion can only make sense in a world in which human life is expendable, and negotiable, and worth whatever we are willing to put into it. The world of abortion is a world in which it makes sense to say, "This life is worthy, and this life is not."

Abortion makes sense in a world in which we think of life in terms of the one that is convenient and the one that is inconvenient. One is timely and one is untimely.

Abortion makes sense in a world in which we ask, "Can we afford this life?" The economics of life only make sense in a world in which there is no inherent dignity to human life, in which you wouldn't speak of every single human life as infinitely precious because every single human life is made in the image of God. The world of abortion would only make sense in a world in which you would say, "There are some lives worth allowing to come to life and there are others that we can do without."

One of the key issues in the abortion debate is the moral character of the act of terminating an unborn human life. We live in an age of euphemism - using a word that isn't what we know it is. When you speak of abortion, you are talking about homicide, murder, the willful taking of a human life. And by the way, understand clearly that this is the willful taking of a human life by *violence*.

One of the issues we must always think about as Christians is the clarity of the Bible. The Bible doesn't flinch. The Bible doesn't use euphemism. The Bible names things for what they are and describes things as they must be described. We should do the same. When we are talking about abortion, we are talking about such things as inserting saline, or other chemicals, within the body of the baby so that the baby dies and is expelled. Or we are talking about a process whereby the baby is dismembered in the womb, and the various parts of the baby are removed. Or, in what has rightly been described as "partial-birth abortion," we are talking about a situation in which a baby is partially allowed out of the womb, but not all the way. That way, it can be killed before it is all the way out, because if the baby comes all the way out it would be recognized legally as homicide.

You see, in the world of abortion, it makes sense that over here in one hospital room you would have extraordinary medical technologies that are wonderfully devoted to saving a baby that is born, say at, 21-22 weeks, or even now, fewer weeks than that. The neonatal medical technologies are absolutely amazing. In a world of abortion it makes sense to celebrate the medical skill in one room, while at the same time, just a few steps down the hall, a baby at the same stage of development (or even much closer to live birth) could be terminated because it is supposedly a woman's right to choose.

You see, in the world of the Bible, it isn't first of all about our rights, it is about God's glory. Our rights find their rightful place only within the context of God's glory. But in the world of abortion, we begin with our rights, and, as it is legally defined in this country, a woman's right to choose. What right have we to choose to end the life of another? In what world does it make sense to speak morally and rationally of a woman's right to choose? Do you realize, however, that there are millions of Americans who think that this right to choose is perhaps the most fundamental right?

One of the interesting things that happened along the way to legalized abortion is that the feminist movement and the abortion-rights movement began to join in common cause. It was not always so. Feminism was, in its earliest time and stage of its own development, *very* pro-life and adamantly anti-abortion. However, by the 1960's, these two movements came together on the argument that a woman must have this right - a fundamental right to end a pregnancy. Without this right, it is argued, a woman would never be able to be equal to men, because men do not have to worry about being pregnant, in terms of their own professional development.

You just try for a few moments - and it *is* our responsibility to try - to get into that world and to try to think abortion through. You will come to understand that abortion makes sense to people who think that our existence is primarily about our rights - that we are human beings who stand on our own two feet, that we are autonomous human beings, that we are answerable to no one, that we are our own independent moral agents, and that we have the right to decide who will live and who will die.

In the world of the Bible, that is simply unthinkable. In a world that begins with the sovereignty of God, that is absolutely unimaginable. In a world that is a Scripture, Gospel-world, the question is - how can we be found faithful and reflect the glory of God in every dimension of our lives?

We come to understand that we fall short of the glory of God, but we understand that we were made for the glory of God. To turn that on its head and decide that we ourselves will become the judge of who will live and who shall die - that is unthinkable.

Click [here](#) for Part One of this message, or click [here](#) for Part Two of this message.

Tomorrow: The short philosophical bridge between the German Third Reich and the atrocity of abortion in the United States.

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