

The Sovereign of Life

That life is precious seems like a fairly obvious truth, and for many it is. Childbirth, the death of a loved one, frightening medical diagnosis', and other things provoke reflection on the fragile and wonderful nature of human life, regularly. But for too many, the precious nature of life is of little or no concern. Typically, figures like serial killers and malevolent genocidal rulers come to mind when considering those who think little of life, and for good reason. Illustrations of their wickedness are plentiful. But we deceive ourselves if we think that only the hardest of criminals have a low view of life. We are treated daily to a barrage of people proving, that to them, life is cheap. The Internet is filled with videos of individuals being beaten (in some cases, to death) because of the color of their skin or their political views. Terrible instances of verbal harassment, disrespect, and inhumanity abound, and the problem is perfectly exemplified in the person who decries injustice, physically harms another person to protest their point, then defends abortion while someone else records it all and posts the video which then goes viral. In many ways, we are no different than the Romans.

What all people must recognize is that God is the Creator and Sovereign of life. Genesis 1:27 says, "So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." The Psalmist declared, "Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture" (Ps. 100:3). The fact that God created us in His image means that every human being has value. Jesus said one soul is worth more than the entire world (Matt. 16:26). It also means that God loves and cares for every person. He provides for us physically (Matt. 5:45) and desires salvation for everyone (2 Pet. 3:9), and offered His only begotten Son to make it possible (John 3:16). As God's people it is imperative that we learn to view and respect life in the way God does.

Respecting life means opposing every kind of murder, including abortion. The intentional taking of human life is condemned in every dispensation of man (cf. Ex. 20:13; Gal. 5:13). Murder is a direct result of rejecting God as the Creator, Sustainer, and Sovereign of life (Rom. 1:29). The very thought of one maliciously snuffing out the innocent life of another should anger and disgust us, especially when that life is in its most vulnerable state—the womb. Millions of people in this world passionately protest the death penalty for a convicted murderer, or deforestation, or some imagined abuse of animal life, while viciously defending the "right" of a person to gruesomely dismember and destroy a baby in his mother's womb. Such is hypocrisy of the highest degree and a warped understanding of how valuable human life truly is. God's people simply cannot stand for it.

Additionally, recognizing God as the Sovereign of life means supporting the government in its God ordained role to punish those who take innocent life. God said "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Gen. 9:6). Government is "God's minister" and He has given it the responsibility to "execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Rom. 13:4). This includes capital punishment in some cases (Rom. 13:4), and we must recognize the difference between a murderer unjustly taking the life of an innocent person, and

the government exercising its God approved role in completing punishment on one whose crime meets the standard of execution. We must support the government and pray for our leaders, that they may carry out their office in the way God expects (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

As God's people we must recognize the importance of treating all people with respect and dignity. We must "honor all people..." (1 Pet. 2:17) which means understanding that every soul is precious, and treating them accordingly. There is no excuse for racial prejudice, abusive language, or mistreatment of any kind, to any person, for any reason. Instead, we must practice the Christian ethic of love. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). We are to love our enemies, and bless and pray for them (Matt. 5:43-48). We must not harbor hatred in our hearts for our fellow man (Matt. 5:21-26) or seek retaliation against them (Matt. 5:38-42). Every human being is made in the image of God and has a soul that will live somewhere for eternity. If we recognize God as the Sovereign of life and seek to view life as He does, as we should, then we will desire the best for every person, whether friend or foe. We will recognize the precious nature of life and treat it with the careful esteem it deserves.