

The Sanctity of Life

By Ethan R. Longhenry

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7). “Jesus said unto her, ‘I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die’” (John 11:25-26ab).

People everywhere honor life and the ability to live. Even though we all experience some level of unpleasantness during life, we all still hold fast to it and seek to continue to live. The impulse to exist and survive is primal and deeply rooted not just in mankind but also in all living creatures in the world. What makes life special?

Science can explain many things about our existence, but it cannot tell us why we exist. Various aspects of life can be manipulated in many ways, but we cannot create life from our own inventions nor can we easily explain how it could be that life exists in the first place. The end of life remains final; we cannot by our own ingenuity raise the dead.

Life, therefore, is a gift: a benefit and blessing no one deserves or ever could deserve. As a gift, it is something entirely out of our own control and most precious.

The Bible reveals how life is a gift bestowed upon many of the creations by the Creator God (Gen. 1:1-2:3). We are all given the opportunity to share in life under the sun. While some people enjoy longer lives, healthier lives, and/or better quality of life than others, all of us equally share in the gift of existence (Acts 17:26-28).

Since life is a precious gift from our Creator God, life is sacred. But what does the sanctity of life have to do with our daily existence? What makes life worth living?

The Creator God not only provides life but loves that which He has created (John 3:16; 1John 4:8). Love does not seek its own but seeks to give and share with others; so it is that we exist, and God seeks a relationship with humans whom He created in His own image (Gen. 1:26-27; 1Cor. 13:4-8; John 17:20-23). On account of His love He does not force us to follow His ways. Nevertheless, He has made known to mankind through Jesus His Son how to truly live so that we may obtain everlasting life (John 11:25-26; 1John 5:20).

The way to truly perpetuate life is not found in scientific processes or in technological advancements; true life is only found in the God who freely gave us life and stands ready to provide eternal life (John 17:3). Therefore, we do best to seek after God and live in harmony with Him and His creation; to continue to live outside of His intention and will for His creation will result in separation from Him and alienation from the life that is in Him (Isa. 59:2; Eph. 4:18)!

Life is special and sacred, a gift from the Creator. He takes no pleasure in death; He wants everyone to enjoy life both now and forevermore (John 3:16, 1Tim. 2:4). If we truly honor life as sacred, we will give praise to the One who gave us life and try to live according to His purposes; thus we can experience life as God always intended now and also obtain the resurrection of life forevermore. Let us honor and preserve life by aligning our will with God's!

Don't Save It for the Funeral

An elderly man lay dying in his bed. In death's agony, he suddenly smelled the aroma of his favorite chocolate chip cookies wafting up the stairs. He gathered his remaining strength, and lifted himself from the bed. Leaning against the wall, he slowly made his way out of the bedroom, and with even greater effort forced himself down the stairs, gripping the railing with both hands.

With labored breath, he leaned against the doorframe, gazing into the kitchen. Were it not for death's agony, he would have thought himself already in heaven, for there, spread out on the kitchen table were literally hundreds of his favorite chocolate chip cookies. Was it heaven?

Or was it merely one final act of heroic love from his devoted wife, seeing to it that he left this world a happy man?

Mustering one great final effort, he threw himself toward the table. His aged and withered hand made its way to a cookie at the edge of the table, when his wife suddenly smacked it with a spatula.

"Stay out of those," she said. "They're for the funeral."

She's not the only person to save something for a funeral that should have been shared long before. It often seems a shame that flowers are sent at a funeral rather than beforehand when they could truly be enjoyed. Many of the comments made at a funeral reflect the realization that we didn't express our feelings adequately to those we love while they were alive: "What a wonderful friend she was. I never told her how much I appreciated what she meant to me!" "I hope he realizes how much I loved him!"

If someone means something special to you, don't save it for the funeral. Share it with them now! "Therefore comfort one another and edify one another, just as you are doing" (1Thes. 5:11).

A Moments Wisdom

- Christians are not sinless, but they should sin less.
- During Bible Classes and sermons, some Christians are afflicted with S.A.D.D. - "Spiritual Attention Deficit Disorder."
- "If you want a religion that makes you feel comfortable, I certainly cannot recommend Christianity." - C. S. Lewis
- Read the Bible for information, not confirmation.
- The mind is like a parachute; it only works when it is open.
- There are no small sins against our Great God. The enormity of the sin is measured against the greatness of the One offended.
- The Son of God became the Son of Man in order that sons of men could become sons of God.
- With all due respect, even God does not get everything He wants; He wants all men to be saved.
- First seek to understand, and then seek to be understood.
- "Religious truth is captive in a small number of little manuscripts which guard the common treasures, instead of expanding them. Let us break the seal which binds these holy things; let us give wings to truth that it may fly with the Word, no longer prepared at vast expense, but multitudes everlastingly by a machine which never wearies to every soul which enters life." (Johannes Gutenberg, invented the mechanical moveable type printing press [1439] and produced the first printed Bible [1455])