

contentious ISSUES

A Biblical Perspective on Tough Topics

SERMON NOTES

Week 1 January 5, 2025

“Abortion”

Genesis 9:5-6; Psalm 139:13-16; Luke 1:39-45;
1 Corinthians 6:19-20

I. History of Abortion in the U.S.

- A. The 1973 Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade* guaranteed women the right to have an _____.
- B. The 2022 Supreme Court ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* _____ *Roe v. Wade*.
- C. The annual number of U.S. abortions reached its _____ levels around the late 1980s and early 1990s.

II. The Abortion Debate

- A. Christians that support legalized abortions believe there are some circumstances in which having an unplanned child would be too _____ for the woman.
- B. Christians that oppose legalized abortion do so because they believe that life is a _____ from God and that only God should take life away.

III. Biblical Perspective and Denominational Stance

- A. The Bible never specifically mentions abortion, but there are scripture passages that might _____ our position on the issue.
 - 1. The ending of human life is God's domain. (Genesis 9:5-6)
 - 2. God sees us, knows us, and forms us in our mother's womb. (Psalm 139)
 - 3. Those in the womb can sense God's Spirit. (Luke 1:39-45)
 - 4. Our bodies are not our own, but belong to Christ. (1 Cor. 6:13-20)
 - 5. In Mary's story, God uses the unlikely and difficult to accomplish his purpose.
- B. The UMC believes in the sanctity of _____ life, but also in the well-being of the mother.

IV. Reducing Abortions

- A. Pro-life and pro-choice advocates need to find some middle ground where they can work together to _____ the number of abortions.
- B. There are several areas of _____ ground that can be explored to reduce abortions.
 - 1. Understanding and addressing the reasons for failure to use birth control.
 - 2. Reclaim the sense of the sacredness of sex among people.
 - 3. Compassionately help women find feasible alternatives such as adoption.

V. Moving Forward: The Church

- A. The church must, with compassion and love, articulate to its members the _____ of life.
- B. God takes what we think as “mistakes” and “accidents” and _____ them.
- C. Jesus' _____ is available to all people who have done things they wish they had not done.

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *January 6-12, 2025*

INTRODUCTION

The abortion debate is a longstanding and contentious discourse that touches on the moral, legal, medical, and religious aspects of induced abortion. The debate most visibly polarizes around supporters of the self-described "pro-choice" and "pro-life" movements. So, where do Jesus followers stand on this issue?

Monday: Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:5

Many suggest that at the crux of the conflict on the abortion debate is the question of when life begins. When do you believe life begins; and on what do you base your answer? What do you believe the Bible says about this in Psalm 139 and Jeremiah 1:5?

Tuesday: Luke 1:26-56

Two ideas can be drawn from this passage: first, that God works through unlikely circumstances (young and unwed Mary giving birth to the Christ) and the second, that John "leaped" within his mother's womb – prompted by the Spirit – at the presence of Jesus (a passage that might indicate the Spirit's work in the womb). What significance does this have related to the abortion debate?

Wednesday: I Corinthians 6:12-20

What perspective do we find in these verses regarding an individual's dominion over his or her body? What does it mean to be "members of Christ" and a temple of the Holy Spirit? How should this realization affect the way we live our lives each day?

Thursday: Matthew 18:1-6

What does this Gospel story tell us about Jesus' regard for children? How is this relevant to the abortion debate?

Friday: Luke 7:36-39

What hope does this story of the sinful woman who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume give us? As the church, how can we share the message of God's unconditional love and grace with those who regret past decisions, including the decision to have an elective abortion?

MOVING FORWARD

When it comes to the debate on abortion, there are compassionate, and committed Christians on both sides. Although the Bible never specifically mentions abortion, there are scripture passages that can help clarify our position on the issue (refer to section IIIA on page 1.) For our nation to move forward on this debate, both pro-life and pro-choice advocates need to find a middle ground. And for the Church to move forward on this issue, leaders need to speak about the sanctity of life, we all need to remember that God can bring something good from what we call 'mistakes,' and we need to reach out with grace and compassion to those who struggle with the decision to terminate a pregnancy.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) abortion, B) overturned, C) highest. A) traumatic, B) gift. IIIA) clarify, B) unborn. IVA) reduce, B) middle. VA) sacredness, B) redeems, C) grace.