

“In Our Image, After Our Likeness”:

*A Biblical & Practical Theology
of the Image of God in Humanity
Sanctity of Human Life Sunday 2024
Sermon Notes*

➤ **“There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal.” - C.S. Lewis (1941)**

**Four truths about the Imago Dei from Holy Scripture...*

1. Everyone everywhere is created in the image of God...so be awe-full (Genesis 1:26-27; 5:1-3; Psalm 8:5-8)
2. Everyone everywhere is fallen in the image of God...so be careful (Genesis 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Proverbs 14:31; James 3:8-9; 1 John 4:20; Leviticus 19:32)
3. Everyone everywhere is commanded to repent and receive Jesus, the image of the invisible God...so be faithful (Colossians 1:15; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 1:3; John 14:6-9; 1:18 Acts 17:30-31; Rom. 8:29; Col. 3:9-10; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:22-24)
4. Everyone everywhere is destined to exist as immortal horrors or everlasting splendors in the image of God...so be helpful (Revelation 14:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:49; 1 John 3:2)

Next Week: Acts 9:32-43 - “Tabitha, Arise”

MEFC Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of January 21st - 27th

Getting Started

1. Do you remember where you were when you first heard about the overturning of the *Roe v. Wade* decision during the summer of 2022? If so, what were the circumstances? What did you think? How did you feel? Take some time to share together as a group.

Digging Deeper

2. Two years ago on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, we focused on the fact that *after a near half-century, 2022 may give the federally-sanctioned slaughter of innocents a decent burial*. The call on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday that year was for us to become fully convinced that even in a secular nation such as our... **It's biblical to make abortion illegal¹**... and **It's possible to make abortion unthinkable²**. By the grace of God, abortion on demand is indeed becoming increasingly illegal in our country. The U.S. Constitution no longer affords American citizens such a “right”, and the decision is now left for each state to decide³. Provided that you are convinced that it is biblical to make abortion illegal (see footnote #1 below), do you believe that it is possible to make abortion unthinkable? Why or why not? How ought our answer to this question impact our ongoing engagement with this issue?

¹ Genesis 9:5-6; Psalm 82:2-4; Ecclesiastes 8:11; Romans 13:1-7;
1 Peter 2:13-14

² 2 Corinthians 5:17; Proverbs 24:10-12

³ <https://reproductiverights.org/maps/abortion-laws-by-state/>. Though this website is clearly pro-abortion, the graphics and data here are incredibly telling. In the language of the website, the majority of states in our nation now have a posture toward abortion that is “nor protected”, “hostile”, or “illegal”.

Open Your Bible to Proverbs 24:10-12...

3. It's one thing for abortion to become increasingly *illegal*, it's quite another for it to become absolutely *unthinkable*. Without a doubt, such a sea-change in our nation would be the product of a great work of God. It would also involve the tireless efforts of God's people.⁴ In other words, **unborn children don't get rescued because we're pro-life, they get rescued because we're pro-active**. How does Proverbs 24:10-12 speak a powerful word of application to God's people in this matter?

4. One biblical strategy for stopping the slaughter of the unborn in our nation is to **pray without ceasing**. How are Luke's words in Luke 18:1 (and Jesus' parable that follows) such an encouragement in this regard? How many different ways can and should we be praying as a church around this issue?

5. Another biblical strategy to see abortion become increasingly unthinkable is to **promote biblical counseling**. Take a look at 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Which truths here are particularly relevant to the one-to-one personal ministry of the Word of God? How might a referral to our own Harbor Center for Biblical Counseling (www.hcbc.org) potentially be an untold blessing for mothers contemplating the termination of their pregnancies? Even more immediately, how does your pursuit of your 'List of 5' figure in here? Even if some may be pro-choice now, how might the **converting power of the gospel** shape their views in the future (2 Corinthians 5:17)?

⁴ Part of our tireless efforts involve the courage to **speak up in public** about the truth of abortion. Need help? Click here: www.str.org/w/the-sled-test .

6. Yet another pathway to protecting the lives of the unborn is to **champion Christian adoption**. James 1:27 displays God's heart for the orphan with crystal clarity. What are a handful of practical ways that we already do this as a church? What sorts of additional steps might we take together in order to make certain that expectant parents (mothers especially) know that they have viable options for their unborn children?

7. Still a further opportunity that we have as a congregation to affect change in our culture on this matter is to **support crisis pregnancy centers**. Our partnership with New Life Family Services (<https://nlfs.org>) is obviously an outstanding connection here. What did you learn about New Life this past Sunday that encouraged you? How might you as an individual (or a family) become more concretely involved in this wonderful, Christ-exalting ministry in the Twin Cities? If you need some ideas, take a look at the link included above!

8. With the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, we might be tempted to think that the call to **be a single issue voter** has lost its relevance (Genesis 1:26-27; 9:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:1-7). Unfortunately, this couldn't be further from the truth. Now that abortion on demand is no longer constitutionally guaranteed, a concerted effort has been underway among members of the U.S. Congress to codify *Roe* with legislation that would be binding for all 50 states. Now more than ever, it is critical that we continue to vote for lawmakers that are committed to the protection of the unborn - especially during an election year. How well do you research the candidates for whom you vote at the state and federal level? What can you do to stay better informed into the days ahead?