

The Sanctity of Human Life (and Your Life)

Psalm 139

The Psalms (no. 9 in the series)

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Video and audio versions available online:

<https://relentless-love.org/sermons/the-sanctity-of-human-life-and-your-life/>

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This document was prepared by Michael Hanna using Peter's notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please let Michael know. Thank you!

Prayer

And so Father we thank you for how great your love is for us. And Father I pray that this morning we would surrender to your love. Lord God, scripture says your Word is like fire, and we know that your Word is a sword. It's like a knife. And God sometimes I feel despairing because I feel like you ask me to come into a room and swing your sword and it's so sharp that it just cuts in every direction. And then the idea is that I'd sew everybody up in the span of 40 minutes and we go on with our day.

God, I thank you that this is Pentecost Sunday, when we remember how you sent your spirit on the church. Into that jar of clay, those early disciples. And we pray that you would do that now and that Lord God you would do all the cutting. And you would do all the sewing. That you would redeem us, Lord God, for your purposes.

And Lord Jesus if there's anything that I say that is a lie about you, I pray that you would just cut it off. That you would stop it. So I invite you to take me out if you want to, Lord God, but thank you that you are Relentless Love. And Lord, everything you do is love, even when it seems like you hate. Even your hate is ultimately love. So Lord Jesus I pray that you would help us to trust our Father. In your name, Amen.

Message

At the very start of this message I want you to hear me well:

- God adores you more than you could possibly understand.
- In the name of Jesus, you have been forgiven.
- And please don't start listening to this message unless you make it your intention to listen all the way to the end.

Psalm 139

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me!

Have you ever said, “*No one knows. No one understands?*”

The Lord knows and understands. Do you know and understand... you?

God makes some sense to me—that there is a being greater than which none can be conceived, an uncreated Creator, necessary beingness upon which all contingent reality is based. Philosophically God makes sense to me.

And matter, dust, created reality makes some sense to me.

But “me,” or the “I” that observes me. I’m pretty much a mystery to me...

- 1 **O Lord, you have searched me and known me!**
- 2 **You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.**
- 3 **You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.**
- 4 **Even before a word is on my tongue,
behold, O Lord, you know it altogether.**

I think I formulate my words, but that’s only because someone has thought and is formulating me with his Word. He knows what I truly want to say... for He knows who I am. And He knows who I am not.

- 5 **You hem me in, behind and before...**

Acts 17, to the philosophers in Athens, Paul says, “In [God] we live and move and have our being.” God constantly surrounds us, such that each of us is like a baby in a womb, wondering who it is, if there is such a thing as mother or a father...and if there is a mother or father, “Do they want me?”

- 5 **You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.**
- 6 **Such knowledge [*da’ath*] is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I cannot attain it. [*yakowl*: comprehend, conquer, take]**

I can’t comprehend it, conquer it. I can’t take this knowledge like fruit from a tree. I can only receive this knowledge as a gift, like a seed planted in broken and fertile soil, a seed planted in a ball of clay.

- 6 **Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I can’t take it.**
- 7 **Where shall I go from your Spirit?
Or where shall I flee from your presence?**
- 8 **If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
If I make my bed in Sheol [KJV, NKJV: “Hell”], you are there!**

According to this verse it seems that you can’t actually be separated from God...you can only *believe* that you’re separated from God. In the words of CS Lewis “Hell is a state of mind...”¹ And yet it is the deepest darkest prison that there is. It is believing that you are forsaken and unwanted.

Jesus came preaching, “Repent [it means change your mind] the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”

You know Jesus is the first born of all creation, firstborn from the dead...ⁱⁱ It’s like he came and preached to us in this womb of a worldⁱⁱⁱ:

“Our Father and Mother are way closer than you know...”

“You must be begotten from above and born anew...”

“The whole creation groans in travail waiting for the Revelation of you—the children of Glory.”^{iv}

**6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is high; I can’t take it.**

7 Where shall I go from your Spirit? [Ruach: your breath]

That’s such a fascinating question: “Where shall I go from God’s Breath?” For you see, according to Scripture, in some utterly amazing way, that’s what I am: God’s Breath... in a bag of dust, in a bag of clay.

And if you take Scripture seriously, as I do, you’ll see that God’s *neshawma*, is God’s *ruach*, which is God’s *peuma* (in Greek), which is God’s Spirit (in English). And God’s Spirit is God.

Why is God so preoccupied with you?

Well... Cause like part of him is in you... and I suspect part of him is the same as all of him for he “doesn’t give the Spirit by measure,” says Scripture.^v Part of him is in you, or you wouldn’t even be a *you*, wondering what a *you* is!

**7 Where shall I go from your Spirit?
Or where shall I flee from your presence [literally: face]?**

**8 If I ascend to heaven, you are there!
If I make my bed in Sheol [Hell], you are there!**

**9 If I take the wings of the morning
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,**

**10 even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me**

[The messiah is God’s right hand^{vi} and his face].

**11 If I say, “Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light about me be night,”**

**12 even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is bright as the day,
for darkness is as light with you.**

**13 For you formed my inward parts [kilyah: kidneys, guts, innermost feelings];
you knitted me together in my mother’s womb.**

**14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;**

You are God’s work. So according to Scripture you are wonderful. God knows you, and you are wonderful... the word means “uniquely wonderful.” Uniquely wonderful in all creation. “You are marvelous,” says God.

**Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.**

You do know it well, that's why you get so offended when people reject you. When they reject you, they reject the Spirit of God hidden within you. You know it well about yourself and you're learning it about your neighbor.

**Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.**

- 15 My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.**
16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance [golem];

Golem means something like unfinished ball of clay or *fetus*.

- 16 Your eyes saw my *fetus*;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.**

Jonathan is my firstborn. He was born five weeks early, and born after 24 hours of brutally intense labor. I was rather traumatized by the whole ordeal. When I first caught a glimpse of Jon, he was screaming at the top of his lungs and he looked kind of like a bloody, slimy, bruised and rather unformed piece of substance—a *golem*... I remember thinking: gross.

They cleaned him up, put him in my arms screaming at the top of his lungs. And the nurse said, "Talk to him. He knows your voice."

I said, "Hey Scooter..." And immediately he fell silent. It still takes my breath away. He knew my voice.

A few months earlier, I had taken a magic marker and drawn a face on Susan's belly... and I'd talk to her belly before we'd fall asleep. I'd say "Scooter..." (we called him Scooter, cause unlike God we didn't know if he was a boy or girl) "Scooter, I can't wait to meet you. I can't wait to hold you in my arms, and eat ice cream with you, and ride bikes with you... I love you."

And when he was born, he knew my voice. Just think: I'd speak, and although he couldn't see me, touch me, or feel me in that womb of a world... everything would vibrate to the sound of my voice, and he knew my voice, my word. My word came to him in the womb, and he knew me.

It's a bit sobering to think that at the same time, perhaps in the very same hospital, babies more developed than Jon, were being killed in their womb of a world, and then discarded as medical waste. Unwanted.

Since 1973 something like 50 to 60 million babies have been aborted in the United States. If those 50 to 60 million are human beings, it's a holocaust... isn't it? Even if only a small percent are humans—cause granted only a small percent, like 1% of abortions are performed after the 24th week—even if only a small percent are human, that would still be quite a lot of humans wouldn't it?

If a fetus is a human being, it's a holocaust isn't it? But if a fetus is simply a part of a woman's body, then it isn't much different than 50 to 60 million appendectomies.

I hear people say, "*It's my body.*" But any 7th grade biology student knows, it's not simply your body. It's dependent on your body, but not your body; that's the point.

A fetus isn't simply a woman's body. But is it a *somebody*—a human?

What makes a human a human?

- Is it independence from other humans? If so none of us are human—we're all dependent on other humans.
- Is it rational thought? Are drunk people and stupid people inhuman?
- Is it quality of life? If so, most of the world is inhuman.
- Is it taking a breath that makes you human? Are folks on respirators inhuman?

If you were an impartial observer from another planet studying the United States of America, I think you'd conclude that the thing that makes you a person is whether or not another person in a position of power wants you. But who's the person in the position of power? Is it Donald Trump, Barack Obama, the body politic, or the mother...? Or could there actually be a God... Is it God? And why would God want an unborn baby... or you?

James 4:5 · "Scripture says, 'He yearns jealously over the spirit that He has made to dwell in us.'"
1 Cor. 6:19 · "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?"

- We know the Spirit comes to us in the beginning as a breath in dust that makes us human.
- We know the Spirit comes to us through baptism and through words spoken... the word I speak to you is "spirit and life", said Jesus.^{vii}
- We know the Spirit comes at Pentecost and this is Pentecost weekend, when we remember how the spirit filled a temple of dust called the church.
- And every week the Spirit comes to us in wine that is blood and blood that is wine.

That's one way the breath comes to a baby in the womb of a woman with child, the oxygen comes through the umbilical cord carried by the blood. This is all profoundly mysterious; but it must be the reason that God is so preoccupied with blood: the life or the breath is in the blood. And God's breath is in human blood, for people are made or being made in the image of God with the Breath of God. In the beginning God breathed into the dust and Adam became a living soul.

In Scripture killing a chicken is different than killing a child. I suspect that's because a child has the spirit of God, or has it in a unique way. The child experiences consciousness and the capacity to love and be loved. That's the capacity to hear the voice of our Father—our Father who is Love.

And now you may say, "Well God kills lots of children...." If by that you mean he subjects them to death and *numbers their days*, that's entirely true... we just read that this is true. But it's not because He doesn't want them, but precisely because he does want them... He *jealously yearns* for them.

Even in those terrifying passages in the Old Testament, where entire cities of Canaanites are sacrificed to God, read closely and you discover those people are offered to God *because* he wants

them and “jealously yearns over the spirit he has made to dwell in them...” the Lord only disciplines those that He loves. He disciplines us that we might enjoy him forever.

Well Solomon wrote, “As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.” (Ecc. 11:5)

I think that means that we really don’t know when a lump of clay becomes a human being; but we do know that it happens in “the womb of a woman with child.” If you think a house might contain a person, you guard that house. And if that house is also a person... well things get complicated don’t they?

There is so much we don’t know and yet I think there is one thing I have most definitely come to know...

Several years ago, for more than a decade, Susan and I worked and prayed with a friend who lost several children in the most horrifying of ways. Some died as infants after they were born. And some died before they could be born.

In visions late at night the evil one would appear to her and tell her that he had her children. But through prayer Jesus would bind the evil one and reveal to our friend that he had her children in his arms. In fact, He would show them to her. They each had names... both the ones that died after birth and the ones that had been aborted. He showed her that he had her children, he adored her children, and that they all adored her... for decades she had mourned the loss of her children.

Once I said to her, “Ask Jesus, ‘Why are my children still young.’” She was quiet for a minute, and then with absolute wonder in her voice she replied, “I just heard Jesus say, ‘they’re waiting for you to raise them.’”

(That will make you ponder the nature of time and eternity.)

She also learned that the Lord God is their Father, and her husband.

And all of that is a double-edged sword, isn’t it?

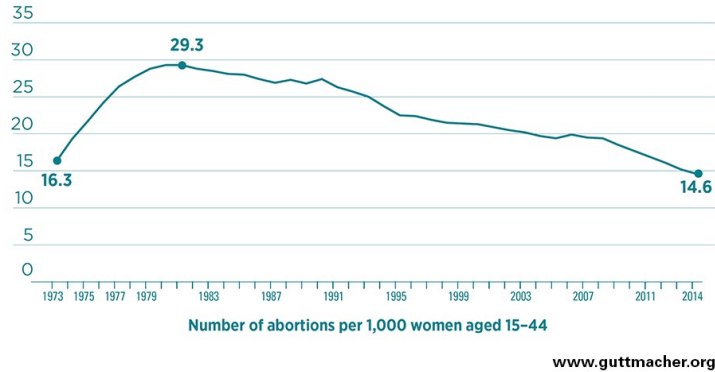
The fetus may very well have been your child, your baby—and that hurts. But listen closely: Jesus adores your baby and He has your baby. He also adores you... but will you let him have you? Or do you refuse to listen?

Even if you’ve made your bed in *Sheol*, He won’t leave you nor forsake you. You’re his baby... his body... his bride... and his temple.

Well, I used to preach about abortion all the time, and I told people I was a one issue voter... I suppose I still am, cause every issue is about the Sanctity of Human Life—it’s just far bigger and more complex than I first imagined, and I’m not convinced that legislation has all that much to do with it...

TRENDS IN ABORTION

In 2014, the U.S. abortion rate reached a historic low

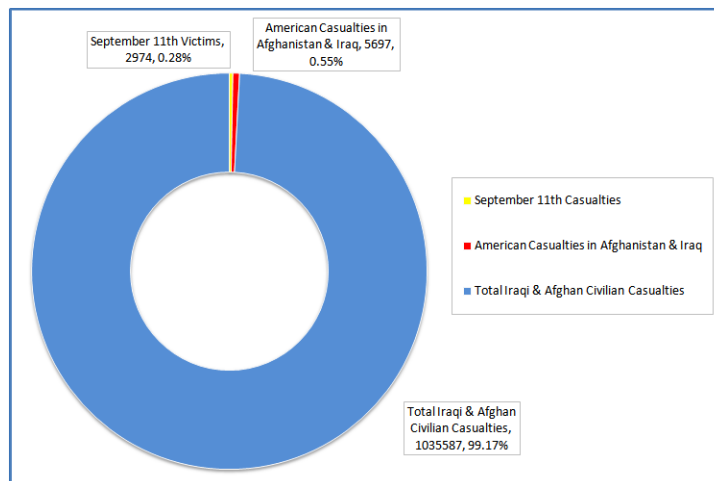


[Graph 1]^{viii}

This is a graph showing abortion rates since 1973 when Roe v. Wade became law. You'll notice that the abortion rate rose sharply from 1973 to 1979. (Sadly, many people think that the Government can give you knowledge of Good and evil.) You'll also notice that the abortion rate has dropped since 1979 to a rate that appears to be even lower than 1973. (There may be forces far more powerful than the Government or legislation.)

The question: "Is abortion right or wrong" is a different question than the question, "What should be our government's legislation in regard to abortion?" Legislation matters, but our legislation is always imperfect.

In the Old Testament there is a great deal of legislation. But in the New Testament, God unleashed a far more powerful and effective weapon than the law. The law can only do so much, and much of the time, governments only make it worse.



[Graph 2]^{ix}

You can always argue graphs and statistics, and I don't know how our government should address problems in the middle east... but if this graph is only partly true, every American ought to pay close attention.

The yellow represents American Casualties on 9-11.

The red represents American military casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq between 2001 and 2010
The blue represents Afghan and Iraqi civilian casualties between 2001 and 2010.

- It represents people that had nothing to do with 9-11 and were just as innocent as the people in the towers... or, maybe, an unborn child.
- It represents human lives that were aborted with my tax dollars.
- *Not* possible human lives... we know they contained the breath of God. Do you think someone in power wants those teenage Afghan and Iraqi boys bleeding to death in the desert?

How about immigrant families seeking asylum at our border? How about the poor? Some studies show that providing services for the poor is more effective in preventing abortions than legislation.^x How about teenage girls abused and raped that suddenly find themselves pregnant? *Or* how about teenage girls that sleep around because they know they can get an abortion and are utterly blind to the Glory of God in human flesh?

- How about sinners? Does someone in power care for sinners?
- How about teenage boys that impregnate teenage girls and walk away?
- How about politicians who divorce and marry women like trophies and sleep with strippers oblivious to the fact that they're temples of the living God?
- How about King David who basically raped Bathsheba, murdered her husband and cause the death of his son—the son of David.
- How about an entire world that's implicated in all this utter disregard for the sanctity of human life, this utter disregard for the glory of God in temples of flesh.
 - Jesus is the Glory of God in a temple of flesh.
 - Jesus said, "whatever you do to the least of these you do to me."

How about all the people that crucify the Messiah?
Does someone in Power, care for us sinners? And what does He do about it?
Are sinners human? Does God abort sinners?
Even if sinners try to abort God... Does God abort sinners?

Soon after we started the Sanctuary, a friend, who was new to the faith at the time, said to me, "You know I never understood why Evangelical Christians didn't abort all their children."

I said, "OK... uh... help me understand what you mean..."

She said, "Well Evangelical Christians believe that God loves all babies, right? And that all children under a certain age automatically go to heaven, right?"

And I said, "Yeah."

"And Evangelical Christians believe that unless people make the correct decision before their body dies, God will damn them to endless conscious torment, right?"

And I said "yeah."

And she said, "Well it seems to me that if a Christian parent loved their children more than themselves, they'd certainly abort their children to ensure that God wouldn't abort their children later, and not just abort them, but torture them forever without end. If they loved a child they'd kill that child, even if it meant that they'd be damned to hell in that child's place?"

Does God want us? Does God Love us or will He abort most of us?

Did you notice that David seems to be talking about babies formed in the womb, and yet, at the same time he's talking about Adam or Humanity formed in the depths of the earth... even in Sheol.

See a fetus may be far more human than you know? And a full-grown man may be far less human than you know?

Scripture says that Jesus is the first born of all creation and the firstborn from the dead. That means that at least everyone who lived before Christ and maybe all of us who live now, in this womb of a world, are like *golem*. We know not how the Spirit comes to us, but it does: in the beginning, at baptism, in communion, even now as I preach. The Spirit comes to us and fashions us in the image of relentless Love, but none of us are fully human until we learn to choose the Good in freedom, until each and every breath is nothing but praise for the Relentless Love that is our God.

It seems to me the greatest holocaust was not committed by the Nazi's in the 1940's. And it's not the holocaust committed against babies right now. I think it's the holocaust that occurs when people speaking in the name of God, declare that God will *not only* abort most of humanity, but endlessly torment most of His children for he no longer wants them. The greatest holocaust is committed by people who refuse to forgive...

And check this out, we commit this holocaust, not only against each other, but against ourselves...

Jesus taught that until you forgive you cannot know forgiveness. Instead, you sink deeper into *Sheol* where people weep and gnash their teeth. But God does not abort you, he descends into that place with you. David writes, "Even if I make my bed in Sheol, even there your right hand holds me..."

Jesus is the right hand of God AND Jesus is the Word of God AND Jesus descends into Hell that you would know: Our Father always wants you. Perhaps he's speaking to you right now...

**16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance; (my *golem*)
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.**

**17 How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!**

**18 If I would count them, they are more than the sand.
I awake, and I am still with you.**

You know, Jesus has the babies. Jesus has the Iraqi boys bleeding to death in the desert. It turns out that you can abort a baby, and you can abort your enemies with a gunshot to the head, but you cannot abort God's plan for your enemies or God's plan for your baby. All their days have been written in a book, and the book ends with everything new. And you're not at the end until you wake and see it and praise God for it. "Every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the seas and all that is within them" worshipping the Lamb on the throne.

And yet, right now, you may not feel like praising God. I fully expect you to be angry.

- Angry at those that don't respect the Sanctity of an infant's life... or
- Angry at those that don't respect the Sanctity of a woman's life... or

- Angry at those that don't respect the Sanctity of a soldier's life... or
- Angry at those that don't respect the Sanctity of your life—your soul knows it full well—there is something absolutely sacred, wonderful and marvelous about you, and those around you.

See? Your anger, and even hatred, is a product of your love for the sanctity of human life. It's just not Perfect Love... or Perfect, completed, hatred...

Maybe you're angry at me, for raising this topic, and not telling you how to vote, or what to do with your anger...

David continues.

- 19 **Oh that you would slay the wicked, O God!
O, men of blood, depart from me!**
- 20 **They speak against you with malicious intent;
your enemies take your name in vain.**
- 21 **Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord?
And do I not loathe those who rise up against you?**
- 22 **I hate them with complete hatred ["perfect hatred"];
I count them my enemies.**
- 23 **Search me, O God, and know my heart!
Try me and know my thoughts [literally: "anxious thoughts"]!**
- 24 **And see if there be any grievous way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting!**

Did you notice what just happened? David made his bed in Hell. David got so angry with those who do not value his life, or any human life, that he attempted to abort himself... no wonder he's anxious.

He cried, "Men of blood, depart from me!" David is a man of blood... or at least was a man of blood.^{xi} Nathan revealed that to him. David took the life of Uriah and the son of David. Last time in Psalm 51 we read, David's prayer upon being confronted by Nathan the Prophet, he cries "deliver me from blood guiltiness oh God."

If only there was a judgment that could deliver David from himself...

- And, of course, there is...
- And, of course it's not a law, it's the love of God poured out...
- And, of course it's infinitely more powerful than any police force or army...

We'll talk about this more next time, but it's perfect love and perfect hatred of all that keeps each of us in bondage. "We love because he first loved us" and nothing is more powerful than love and Love wants you.

Communion

And so, the Word of God, by whom all things are created, the love of God in human flesh, the Son of David who sank into *Sheol* and rose The Prince of Peace, took bread and broke it saying, "This is my

body given to you.” And he took the cup saying, “This is the covenant in my blood drink of it all of you.”

Do you hear what your Father is saying? “I have all power, and this is how much I want you...my body broken, my blood shed.”

There is so much I don’t know; but I do know that God wants you absolutely.

I know a sweet and wonderful woman who was forced to have a saline abortion at the age of fifteen... and she caught a glimpse of her daughter. I know that Jesus has her daughter. I’m not in the least concerned for her daughter. But I’m concerned for her. And for all those implicated with her and all who love her—I think they may have made their bed in *Sheol*, for they believe the lie that God our Father does not want them.

She told my wife, “I can’t go to church and I cannot be forgiven...”

Do you understand? She thinks that she must be aborted from the Jerusalem above, her Mother^{xii}, and the infinite love of Her Father, our Creator. Maybe you think that way too...

Close your eyes... and picture yourself floating in a womb.
And now listen to the voice of your Father.

He speaks and everything vibrates to the sound of his voice. This is what he says:
“I made you, and I know you, and I know that you are wonderful.”
“I want you, with all I have and all I am.”

Now, if you’ve had an abortion or been party to an abortion, I think he says:
“I make all things new. I have all the babies.”
“Now will you let me have you?
“I have always forgiven you, but now will you receive my Word?”

With the eyes of your heart, look, you can see his Word, His name is Jesus. In one hand he has an unformed ball of clay, and in the other he has a seed and He is that Seed. Kind of like when he puts them together, he makes you... unique in all creation.

He is so incredibly excited to make you. But how do you feel about that? Would you agree with your own creation? Would you let him...create you? Redeem you? Save you? Hold you? And enjoy you forever more?

Say this after me, “May it be done unto me according to your Word.”

The dark cups are wine, the light cups are juice...

Tear off a piece of bread, dip it in the cup, and place the seed in your golem.

Benediction

If you're like me, I can preach that he loves us, but I have a hard time sometimes believing he loves me. And maybe you have a hard time believing that he loves you. So can we sing that last verse and I want you to close your eyes and I want you to think about you, unique in all creation.

*He loves me,
Oh, how he loves me!
Oh how he loves me!
Oh, how he loves!*

And now you may be thinking, "isn't he aware of how I don't love me? And how I don't really love the person on my right and my left? And how I totally disregard the sanctity of human life..."

Oh, he's very aware. In fact, every day of your life has been written in a book. He knows it. It's actually part of the gestation process. I think he's revealing to you that you can't pay for his love. And his mercy is free.

So in the name of Jesus, you are forgiven. You're forgiven. Live from that place, and you will change the world. You see, I didn't tell you how to vote because I really don't know how to vote. And I'm not saying that doesn't matter. I'm saying pray, do what you think is right, but do what Jesus would do. You know, he lived in a society where infanticide was a practice. Roman society. He also lived in a Parasitical society. He lived in a society that is a lot like ours, I think.

May you speak the truth in love, and not be afraid to die. In Jesus' name, believe the gospel. Amen.

Endnotes

ⁱ ""Then those people are right who say that Heaven and Hell are only states of mind?" "Hush" said he sternly, "Do not blaspheme. Hell is a state of mind-ye never said a truer word. And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind-is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly. For all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains.

"The choice of every lost soul can be expressed in the words 'Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.' There is always something they insist on keeping, even at the price of misery. There is always something they prefer to joy-that is, to reality. Ye see it easily enough in a spoiled child that would sooner miss its play and its supper than say it was sorry and be friends. Ye call it the Sulks. But in adult life it has a hundred fine names . . . Revenge and Injured Merit and Self-Respect and Tragic Greatness and Proper Pride. . . "The whole difficulty of understanding Hell is that the thing to be understood is so nearly Nothing..."

"All Hell is smaller than one pebble of your earthly world: but it is smaller than one atom of this world, the Real World. Look at yon butterfly. If it swallowed all Hell, Hell would not be big enough to do it any harm or to have any taste."

"It seems big enough when you're in it, Sir."

"And yet all loneliness, angers, hatreds, envies and itchings that it contains, if rolled into one single experience and put into the scale against the least moment of joy that is felt by the least in Heaven, would have no weight that could be registered at all. Bad cannot succeed even in being bad as truly as good is good. If all Hell's miseries together entered the consciousness of yon wee yellow bird on the bough there, they would be swallowed up without a trace, as if one drop of ink had been dropped into that Great Ocean to which your terrestrial Pacific itself is only a molecule."

"I see," said I at last. "She couldn't fit into Hell."

He nodded. "There's not room for her," he said. "Hell could not open its mouth wide enough."

"And she couldn't make herself smaller?-like Alice, you know."

"Nothing like small enough. For a damned soul is nearly nothing: it is shrunk, shut up in itself. Good beats upon the damned incessantly as sound waves beat on the ears of the deaf, but they cannot receive it. Their fists are clenched, their teeth are clenched, their eyes fast shut. First they will not, in the end they cannot, open their hands for gifts, or their mouths for food, or their eyes to see."

"Then no one can ever reach them?"

"Only the Greatest of all can make Himself small enough to enter Hell. For the higher a thing is, the lower it can descend—a man can sympathise with a horse but a horse cannot sympathise with a rat. Only One has descended into Hell."

"And will He ever do so again?"

"It was not once long ago that He did it. Time does not work that way when once we have left the Earth. All moments that have been or shall be were, or are, present in the moment of His descending. There is no spirit in prison to whom He did not preach."

- C. S. Lewis, The Great Divorce p. 69, 75, 123-124

ii Colossians 1:15-20, Revelation 1:5

iii 1 Peter 3:19, Ephesians 4:8-10

iv John 3:1-8, Romans 8:18-25

v John 3:34

vi Isaiah 52:10, 53:1, 59:36, 62:8, 63:5

vii John 6:63

viii <https://www.gutmacher.org/fact-sheet/induced-abortion-united-states>

ix http://www.prosebeforehos.com/government_employee/09/11/perspective-on-911-and-the-invasions-of-iraq-afghanistan/

x With economic prosperity and strong social services, American abortion rates reached a twenty-four-year low during the 1990s, to a rate of only sixteen per thousand women of childbearing age. It has long been known that there are fewer abortions in nations where prospective mothers have access to contraceptives, the assurance that they and their babies will have good health care, and at least enough income to meet their basic needs.

The most notable examples are Belgium and the Netherlands, where only seven abortions occur among each thousand women of childbearing age. In some predominantly Roman Catholic countries where all abortions are illegal and few social services are available, such as Peru, Brazil, Chile, and Colombia, the abortion rate is fifty per thousand. According to the World Health Organization, this is the highest ratio of unsafe abortions.

-- Jimmy Carter, Our Endangered Values: America's Moral Crisis, page 74

xi 2 Sam. 12:7-14, 16:7-8; 1 Chron. 22:6-10, 28:1-3; Psalm 51:1-4

xii Galatians 4:26