

Dr. Luke And The Sanctity Of Human Life
Luke 1:34-45

Francis Schaeffer said that “cultures can be judged in many ways, but eventually every nation in every age must be judged by this test: How did it treat people? Our own is no exception. Those who regard individuals as expendable raw material do battle on many fronts with those who see each person as unique and special, worthwhile, and irreplaceable.”

Today is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday and when we come to this usually think of abortion. Some will try to tell you that abortion was a non issue in the NT world.

Abortion was deadly to the mother so infanticide was common.

If baby was unwanted the mother would give birth to baby and then throw it out to die.

This was a common practice and perfectly legal.

But just doing a little research on this subject it easy to see they are wrong. Abortion was also common in the NT world.

Correct that infanticide was more widespread in the NT world because today it is illegal.

However, abortion was practiced in the Roman Empire with many of the methods of today being used

Drugs and poisons were given to women so that they would never conceive or abort when conception did occur.

Metal instruments were produced that were used in abortions and some of the writings of the doctors of the time describe them and how they were used.

Yes, abortion was more dangerous in the NT world than today.

Even so abortion was readily available and widely practiced.

Many times a man would force a woman to abort a baby so that his illicit sexual activity would be covered up.

Many women sought abortions to preserve their sex appeal because a baby changes a woman’s body.

Because of abortion and infanticide the population of the Roman Empire steadily declined.

The wealthy did not want to share their wealth with many offspring, while the poor felt unable to support large families.

They corrected this with abortion.

Abortion was also a corrective to the many inefficient means of contraception of the time.

Since abortion was practiced in the NT culture, it would seem that the NT would talk about such an issue.

Unfortunately, the word abortion is not used in the NT.

Because of the silence of the NT on this issue, some view this as saying that Christians can support abortion.

True that abortion is not mentioned but several principals are discussed that apply.

Of the NT writers, we find some that are well educated.

The apostle Paul was well educated.

He had much knowledge and education under the well know rabbi Gamaliel.

One of Paul’s converts was Luke. “Our dear friend Luke, the doctor (KJV- physician), and Demas send greetings.” Colossians 4:14, NIV.

Like in our day, Luke went through special training and education to be a doctor, a physician.

Ancient Roman medicine was, surprisingly, incredibly similar to that of the late nineteenth century.

Since abortion involves a great deal of medical issues it’s a shame that Luke never said anything about abortion.

Being a doctor and a Christian would have been good to know his views on the sanctity of human life.

Thesis: From Luke’s gospel, let’s look at the principles that Luke tells us for Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

For instances:

Luke 1:34-45

Luke the medical doctor, lets us know that Mary was a virgin meaning she had not had sex with anyone.

It is possible to wait until marriage to have sex.....

She asks the angel, “*how will this be, since I am a virgin.*” Vs. 34

She doesn't question if what the angel said could happen, she simply wonders what steps will be necessary to make it happen.

The angels answers, vs. 35-37

Mary answers, vs. 38

It's Luke the medical doctor, who tells us that Mary is going to be impregnated by the Holy Spirit.

This is a miracle, a breaking of the laws of nature.

Luke investigated this, vs. 3!

When the angel left Mary, Mary immediately headed to see her relative Elizabeth who was now six months pregnant.

When Mary got to her home and was calling, "Elizabeth, Elizabeth" something amazing happened.

The baby Elizabeth was carrying began his ministry for the Lord.

He began jumping around in Elizabeth's womb. Vs. 41

Remember this child is going to be John the Baptist who announces the Messiah who will take away the sins of the world.

Elizabeth explains what has happened in vs. 44-45

Notice something here.

Jesus is barely an embryo in Mary's womb and the first one to recognize who he is, is an unborn child six months along in Elizabeth's womb.

John starts his ministry of announcing the presence of the Christ while in Elizabeth's womb.

Jesus is as much the Son of God at a couple of days inside of Mary as he will be when He's hanging on a cross and she is there weeping at his feet.

John is as much the prophet John The Baptist six months into the pregnancy as he will be thirty years preaching a gospel of repentance for the day of the Lord is at hand.

God is the author and creator of life.

God is intricately involved in every child's growth in the womb.

God says that he fashions us in the womb (Psalm 139).

God's calling on our lives takes place before we even are conceived in the womb.

When Jeremiah thought he was not worthy to be a prophet, God told him, *Jeremiah 1:5* "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

Almost 60 million abortions since Roe vs. Wade.

Does anybody know how many of the 60 million had a call of God upon their lives?

Does anybody know many singers never got the chance to sing

how many athletes never got the chance to play

how many mothers and fathers who never got the chance to love

how many doctors never got a chance to practice medicine (maybe even cure cancer)

and how many preachers who never got the chance to preach?

Only God knows the answer to those questions.

Luke 8:1-3

A common argument when one opposes abortion is that this person is against women. To be "pro-life" is seen by some as being "against women's rights."

Luke has a special interest in women.

Only he tells us of the prominence of women in Christ's ministry.

God inspired Luke the historian to include in his works stories of women that were not a part of the other New Testament writings.

For how could we otherwise know how prominent women were in the early church without Luke telling us of the faith of women, of the healing of women, of women's role as disciples, of women's part in the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Women as Jesus' disciples is particularly emphasized by Luke.

He not only reports about the female followers of Jesus Christ, but specifically names them here in Luke 8.

Did we know that the biblical story of Gabriel's announcement to Mary that God had chosen her to be the mother of the Messiah is recorded **only** in the Gospel of Luke?

Without the inspired writings of Luke, we would also not know about the miraculous conception of John the Baptist to Elizabeth;

the story of the prophetess Anna;

the virgin Mary's song of praise:

the story of the woman anointing Jesus' feet with her tears and costly oil.

Luke is unapologetically in support of women and so am I and Firm Foundation Ministries!!!!!!

Of course, Luke was no feminist.

His purpose was to show how God had turned society upside down.

Rich and complacent were rejected by God while the poor and repentant were accepted.

Luke 14:12-14

This command of Jesus fascinates me.

Luke is not a cook or a chef, he is a doctor.

Think about his profession.

In those days to make a living at being a doctor the best choice was to be a medic to a Roman legion.

Second best was to be the personal doctor to a rich and powerful family.

Beyond that, one could open his own practice.

However, this did not pay well and many thought these kinds of doctors were quacks.

Even if one did seek out the help of a physician, if poor the doctor would not help.

Those who most needed the help of the doctor could not afford him.

Even though Matthew and Mark include this remark by Jesus I am sure it had special meaning to Luke:

"Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick." Luke 5:31.

Once Luke became a Christian, he attached himself to Paul.

Luke was useful on Paul's missionary journeys with all the persecutions, shipwrecks, and sicknesses of the group.

Luke was attached to Paul but I'm sure he used his expertise for the good of all.

Much work by a gifted doctor to do because many doctors would not see the poor.

During the 1st four centuries of Christianity there were a group of Christian doctors called, "Without silver."

That is, they practiced their craft for free to assist those in need while spreading the gospel.

I am sure Luke was one of the first.

Luke knew that he would receive little compensation for his services.

Luke would receive his pay at the resurrection of the righteous. *"Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

Luke 12:33, 34, NIV.

Notice who Jesus mentions here that Dr. Luke brings out- the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind- those who are handicapped and disabled, those who are unable to repay a kindness shown to them.

With modern medical technology can tell is a baby in the womb will have birth defects.

If that is found out many encourage the parents to abort.

Life will be too hard with a handicapped child.

Dr. Luke does not seem to favor that idea.

In our day the elderly many times are ignored, pushed to the side, many of them cannot repay a kindness.

They are unable to contribute anymore so just ignore them.

Sad commentary on our society.

Talk about the sanctity of human life, this definitely is an example.

Luke 19:10

In Luke 15, Luke records three parables of Jesus.

The parable of the shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep and goes after the lost one.

The woman who lost a coin and finds it.

The parable of the prodigal son who comes home to the Father. *"But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Luke 15:32, NIV.*

The best way to value human life is to save it- not from physical death, but from spiritual death.
This is why Jesus came so that we could come home to the Father.