

Theological Equipping Class

The Value and Dignity of Human Life

July 6, 2025

Proposition 1: Humans are Valuable

Passages:

- *Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29–31)*
- *Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:26)*
- *He said to them, “Which one of you who has a sheep, if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not take hold of it and lift it out? Of how much more value is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” (Matthew 12:11–12)*

Proposition 2: Human Value Derives from Relationship to God

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. (Genesis 1:26–31)

Proposition 3: Human Value is Innate or Intrinsic

Proposition 4: The Image of God Was Defaced (Corrupted) But Not Lost in the Fall

Passages:

- *When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. (Genesis 5:3)*
- *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6)*
- *You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)*
- *Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death... (Exodus 21:12–32)*
 - *“even though we grant that God’s image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it was so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity.” (John Calvin, Institutes)*

Proposition 5: All Humans are Made in the Image of God and thus Valuable

Proposition 6: Murder, Assault, and Abuse are all Attacks Not Only on another Person, but on the Image of God they Bear

Simply by virtue of being human, mankind is valuable and this applies to any and all humans. Mankind has intrinsic dignity and value as being created in the image of God regardless of developmental stage, age, gender, mental capacity, physical capacity, or any other factor.

Abortion

When does life begin? When does a person become a person?

1. Logic
2. Science
3. Bible

Passages:

- *For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. (Psalm 139:13)*
- *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. (Psalm 51:5)*
- *And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. (Luke 1:41-44)*
- *When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. (Exodus 21:22-25)*
- *There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood... (Proverbs 6:16-17)*
- *Father of the fatherless and protector of widows is God in his holy habitation. (Psalm 68:5)*
- *You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)*
- *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6)*
- *Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. (Psalm 127:3-5)*

Suicide (including "Doctor Assisted")

Euthanasia and End of Life Discussions

Capital Punishment and War

OT Background

- *Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6)*
- *Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die. "Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death. "Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death. "Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death. "When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed. "When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money. "When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman's husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if there is harm, then you shall pay life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe. "When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth. "When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. If it gores a man's son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned. (Exodus 21:12–32)*
- *There are six things that the Lord hates, seven that are an abomination to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood... (Proverbs 6:16–17)*

NT Controlling Text:

- *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. (Romans 13:1-4)*

Application for all issues related to sanctity of life and end of life discussions:

1. Does Scripture speak to this issue explicitly?
2. Does Scripture speak to this issue by implication (an implicit truth is just as true as an explicit truth if actually true)?
3. Would this issue distort or deny the inherent value and dignity of all human life?
4. Does this issue somehow suggest that some life is more or less valuable than others?

Simply by virtue of being human, mankind is valuable and this applies to any and all humans. Mankind has intrinsic dignity and value as being created in the image of God regardless of developmental stage, age, gender, mental capacity, physical capacity, or any other factor.