

What is life? These last weeks of September we quickly switched gears to do a short sermon series on life. And in many ways, it was providential how it all came together so well, and how we were able to have two amazing special guest speakers speak on the quality of life and rights of life for us. They both, in short order, put together a great testimony for us to hear and words to help us to understand the nature of life better.

But as we went through these messages, and in my own preparation for this series, I was struck by the question: what is life? I watched multiple videos and had several discussions about the nature of life. And defining life is where it becomes difficult to talk about the nature of end of life decisions and prenatal concerns. We simply don't have a very clear answer for life in our culture. And that's really, to me, where the issues begin.

Because if we don't have an answer for the question of life then how do we make life and death decisions? I mean, if we can't even define what life is then we can't make any good decisions when it comes to when that life ends or what is appropriate to do with a life.

I also struggle with this lack of a definition of life because of the value that we place on life. Less and less we as a culture value the nature and purpose of life. We look more now at a life as expendable than I think we did even 30 years ago. And not just infants in the womb but even an older person who is slowly dying or a mentally or physically challenged person who seems to have little to offer our world. We look at their ability to produce or to have purpose before we give them value. We don't see the loss of a homeless person as the same loss as a soldier. We don't look at the loss of a prostitute in the same way as a mother. And then we have race and social standing and other factors that cause us to value one life over another. And in

so many ways, that's depressing. But when we look at the Bible, we see so clearly how God values all human life, even animal and plant life, too. And though animals and plants have a different purpose than humans, all life has value. Value that is innate. Value that cannot be taken away. Value that was bestowed by God himself. And we see that really clearly in Genesis 1.26 where it says, "So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." (NIV) And then we see in John 3.16 that love for all creation, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (NIV)

And so, being unable to define life is a problem. But I don't think the Bible clearly defines life, either. There is no verse that says, "Once a person stops breathing, they are no longer alive." Or "Once a person's heart stops, they're deceased." Or "Thou art deadeth when thou braineth waveth stoppeth". So, what should we do? I'm not an expert, but if we can't easily define life and come to some kind of consensus of what it means, I believe we need to tread very lightly on life issues. Pray hard about those decisions and ask for help and advice. We need to err on the side of quality of life and not intervening when we can allow a more natural conclusion. But it also means that we value anything alive and anything that may have life. But we especially need to value other people regardless of their productivity or purpose in our world. We know that Jesus is the definition of life. And we shouldn't get in the way of his purpose for a life. A life may end by his will before we're ready for it to end. But we also shouldn't end a life just for our own purposes either. Life and life issues need lots of prayer. Let's start there.

Serving Him and you,
Matthew

Parsonage Phone

In an attempt to diligently manage our resources, the board has decided to remove the telephone from the parsonage. It is not used often and simply an expense that we felt comfortable removing. The church office number (329-2150) does forward to Matthew's cell now, so he is very available through that number, but always feel free to call/text/message Matthew at his cell (507-360-2405) or just stop by the house!

Sermon Series

We started a new sermon series called 'Culture of a Kingdom: A Study on the Sermon on the Mount pt 1' on October 4th. It'll be an interesting look at the words Jesus gave us in Matthew 5-7. If you missed this Sunday, you can check it out on the website and then be sure to join us for the rest of this series on Sundays at 9am.



September Financials

	Weekly Actual	Yearly Actual	Yearly Budget
Sep 6	\$2,320.00	\$45,280.60	\$48,257.73
Sep 13	\$1,126.00	\$46,406.60	\$49,589.02
Sep 20	\$998.00	\$47,404.60	\$50,920.31
Sep 27	\$2,182.00	\$49,586.60	\$52,251.60
Totals	\$6,626.00		

Prayer List

Tina Althiser (Judy B's friend) – colostomy blockage
 Tammy Bowman – stage 4 kidney failure
 Steve Cameron – hand injury, healing well
 Donnie Davis - tests
 Todd Hamm – cancer treatments
 Clarice Powell – ankle surgery went well
 Norma Powell – nursing home
 Zack Prater (Marion T's son) – neck surgery postponed
 Lori Rodriguez – stage 4 cirrhosis of liver
 Kolston Wickert – teen with brain tumor
 Judy Windsor – hospice

Condolences:

Jenny Farr family
 Frieda Stambaugh family
 Don Holt (Shirley R's brother) family
 Kathy Yackley (friend of Marion T's) family

Praises:

Mary Belville's home repairs

Events:

Sun, Oct 11th
 6:00 pm Board Meeting
 Tues, Oct 13th
 Man Up Postponed

Instructions to Publishers

- Complete and file one copy of the form with your publisher annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.
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