

INTRODUCE

Well, good morning church! If I haven't met you yet, my name is Chris Martin, and I'm the Lead Pastor here.

If you've got your Bibles, and I hope you do, please open them up to Genesis chapter 1. Genesis 1. That's where we're going to start.

We want every person to have a hand on their Bible. You can open your phone or tablet to Genesis 1.

INTRODUCTION: TRENDING

When we did our members feedback survey last year,

- One you wanted some more specific teaching and training
- on how to handle current events and issues
- from a biblical perspective.

And so, we started a topical series called TRENDING.

So, we only got to two of them this year.

- I preached on the trending topic of Transgender Identities.
- And today is number two,
- and we're talking about the topic of **SLIDE** abortion.

If your newsfeed looks anything like mine, it's been blown up with abortion stuff since Texas passed the Heartbeat Bill. And I felt very strongly compelled to preach this message.

Now, this is a very heavy topic for us to enter into today.

- And I've read a ton, and listened to a ton,
- and I just cobbled this sermon together
- from a bunch of other people. So, credit to them!

But, there is a deeper dive you can take into this issue, and we've put all those resources on **SLIDE** fathomchurch.org/trending where you can find more info.

Furthermore, if you have any questions about anything in this topic you can text them to **SLIDE** 720-507-8687, and we'll record a follow-up podcast.

DISCLAIMER #1

Now, before we begin, two disclaimers:

For some of our women at Fathom,

- this isn't a topic to discuss...
- this is a reality you've lived.

For some of our men at Fathom,

- this isn't theoretical...
- this is real life.

Some in this church

- have had abortions,
- have funded abortions,
- have encouraged abortions.

And I'm not talking statistically speaking, here. I know some of your stories.

So, I want to start by saying this:

- if you feel something today.
 - Gosh, I do not intend to offend or hurt anyone today.
- **But know that a sweet gift of the Holy Spirit**
- **is the gift of conviction.**

It's God's kindness that leads us to repentance. And for some of you...

- I hope that IF you feel the pangs of guilt and shame,
- you'll remember that God's offer is grace and forgiveness.
 - There is no sin you can commit
 - that has more power
 - than the forgiveness Christ offers you.

Now, I'll talk more about that at the end of this sermon.

DISCLAIMER #2

Second disclaimer: this is not a political sermon, ok?

- I am not affiliated with any party.
- We do not make endorsements on policies or politicians.

In fact, when Prop 115 on abortion was on the ballot last year, I wouldn't direct you as our church on how to vote.

- I just don't think that's my job from the pulpit.
- I think what we preach should INFORM what you vote for
 - based on the authority of the Word of God...
- but I won't tell you HOW to vote.

And I had people in our church furious with me for not doing so.

- I was called a supporter of infanticide because I wouldn't.

But listen to me,

- this isn't a political issue.
- It's a spiritual one!
- It's a moral one!

And I DO think it should affect how you vote.

- But my job is to expose the Word of God...
- not tell you what to vote for.

And listen, the political left AND the political right have jacked this thing up!

But I don't want to get too fired up yet...

TRANSITION

Alright, let's get to work. Genesis chapter 1.

- We are people of the book.
- We submit everything in our lives
- under the authority of the Holy Scriptures.

And so, we must begin here...and then we'll move to history, science, and other arguments.

Genesis 1, starting in verse 26.

SLIDE GENESIS 1:26-27

[26] 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."

[27] So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him,
male and female he created them.

EXPLAIN: IMAGO DEI

So, here we have the creation of humanity, and what is known as the doctrine of the Imago Dei.

- That is: humans are created in the image of God.
- Human beings are created differently
 - than every other thing that was created,
 - because we are image bearers.

▪ “Let us make man in our IMAGE.”

▪ “So God created man in his own IMAGE,

▪ in the IMAGE OF GOD he created him.”

And I cannot tell you how foundational this is to the conversation.

This means that human beings are different than animals. Ok?
So, we have to get that first! Every single human life has intrinsically more value than any animal!

ILLUSTRATION: CAT

So, my daughter Harper was playing with my mom a few years ago.

- And Grandma says to Harper,
 - *“I have a dog and a cat at home.”*
- And Harper says,
 - *“I really want a cat, but I can’t get one*
 - *because my dad is allergic.”*

Sidebar...yes, I am allergic to cats...

- but that ain’t the only reason we aren’t getting a cat, alright!
- I’ve made that abundantly clear!

- But my mom says back to Harper,
 - *“Well, maybe one day when you have your own home*
 - *you can have a cat.”*
- And without skipping a beat, Harper replied,
 - *“Yeah...or when my daddy dies!”*

And now I can't leave any beverage unattended in my home

- for fear that my daughter is gonna take me out
- so she can have a feline.

But listen, her theology is way off!

My life isn't LESS valuable than a cat!

ILLUSTRATION: BETTY

And I don't hate ALL animals...just cats!

I have a dog.

- Betty.
- I love Betty.
- She is a good dog.
- She's almost 8 years old.

And we just found out that she has a tumor.

- We're actually getting it removed tomorrow,
- and sent out to find out how serious it actually is.

Now, when the vet told me about this tumor, she said,

- *“If it comes back in the bad category,*
- *I'll refer you to a dog oncologist,*
- *and they can start chemotherapy immediately.”*

And then I asked a follow-up question that deeply offended my vet.

- I asked, “And how much is that gonna cost?”
- Which I thought was a reasonable question!
 - But she was offended!
 - That I would have a limit
 - on what I’d spend
 - to keep Betty alive!

Now, you know when I don’t ask that question?

- If my daughter has a tumor.
- It doesn’t matter how much it costs!
- I’ll rob a bank if I have to!

But it wasn’t my daughter. It was Betty.

- And I love Betty.
- And she’s lived better
 - than a lot of human beings.
- And I WILL cry when she dies.

And then we’ll get a replacement Betty.

- But I have a limit.
- And dog oncologists
- are pretty much that limit.

TRANSITION

So, the Imago Dei.

- Humans have the Image of God in them...
- and thus, are of infinite value!

“Well,” you ask,

- *“when does a person actually become alive?”*
- *Like, I’ll agree that everyone has the Image of God,*
- *but when does that life actually begin?”*

I’m really glad you asked...turn to Psalm 51.

The Psalms are pretty much right in the center of your bible.

So, Psalm 51. We’re going to look at verse 5.

SLIDE PSALM 51:5

[5] Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

EXPLAIN

So, this is King David speaking about the moment of his conception.

- In that moment there was sin.
- Now was that David’s sin, or his mommas?
 - Like, David’s daddy’s name was Jesse,
 - so was there some sort of shady business going on
 - with Jesse’s wife?
 - *“I wish that I had Jessie’s girl!”*
 - That’s where my mind immediately went.

Well, in the Bible, we are given no indication of that.

- PLUS, this verse is from Psalm 51.
- And Psalm 51 is a prayer of repentance by David.

After he was caught in adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband killed!

But in this prayer of Psalm 51, David is repenting of HIS sin, and he points to the fact that he was sinful from conception.

- This didn't happen after 10-weeks in the womb,
- or after the second trimester,
- or after being born.
- It was at conception.

Children are born sinful!

- And every parent of a toddler said, amen!
- It's not nurture...no, it's their nature.

When Harper was two...

- she shrieked at the top of her lungs
- and bit me...
- because I turned off the TV
- after her show was over.

That was not modeled to her!

- She's never seen me scream and bite Maryse!

She was sinful at conception!

As Christians, we believe that in the womb we have a spiritual and moral component.

- We aren't just a mass of cells!
- In utero, we are a body AND a soul.

And then turn once more to Psalm 139. From Psalm 51 to Psalm 139.

Starting in verse 13:

SLIDE PSALM 139:13-16

[13] For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

[14] I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
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;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.

EXPLAIN

What this beautiful Psalm is telling us

- is that when we are still in the womb...
- God intimately knows us.

And he not only knows us,

- but he is the active agent
- in forming us into the people he has designed.

ILLUSTRATION: KNITTING

He uses the language of knitting.

- Now, I don't knit.
 - I didn't know if you knew that...
- But I know many of you do.

In fact, Aubri Porter knitted this pumpkin for my daughter last year.

- Actually, it's the second one,
- because Betty ate the first one...
 - which aids in the oncology decision.

But, look at this thing!

- Aubri didn't just take the knitting...sticks?
 - Told you I didn't knit...
- and accidentally, like haphazardly, create this thing.
- No!
 - She intentionally picked the yarn,
 - and had to follow a pattern.
- There is intentionality all over this pumpkin.

And that's how God works in us.

- While in the womb, he's knitting.
- He's intentional.
- We're not hidden.
- He saw.
- He has days formed for us.

BLANK SLIDE

TRANSITION

So, with all that Bible work...

- We can clearly say:
- the Bible teaches
- that every single human life
- is created in the Image of God
- AND begins at conception.

So, with that doctrine in place, AND THAT MUST COME FIRST, ok?

- We have to start there.
- We are Christians.
- We start with what God says.
- Not what we feel or think.

But with that doctrine in place, what is in the womb?

It's a baby.

And I've read all kinds of language this week that tries to soften that blow.

But it's a baby.

- From the moment of conception...
 - it's a baby.
- It's not a fetus.
 - It's a baby.
- It's not a pregnancy.
 - It's a baby.
- It's not what I read in one article, "a product of conception."
 - No! It's a baby!

And since 1973's ruling in Roe v. Wade more than 50 MILLION babies have been killed!

EXPLAIN: SCIENCE

Now, if this is what the Bible teaches...that at conception there is a baby who is created in the image of God. Then what does science teach?

- Because if secular people are known for believing one thing...
- it's science.

It's one of the most common pushbacks I get to Christianity.

- *"Do you really believe that God created everything in 7-days?"*
- *How do you explain dinosaurs?*
- *How could a flood cover the whole earth?*
- *What do you do with Jonah being swallowed by a fish?*
- *Not to mention hanging your hat on a man*
 - *coming back from the dead.*
- *How do you reckon the Bible with science?"*

Well, frankly, I DON'T think that science and the Bible are at odds.

But for today, in this topic, what does the science say?

Here's the science:

- At eight weeks in the womb a baby has brain waves.
- At eight weeks a baby has a heartbeat.
- At eight weeks she's sucking her thumb.

- She has a functioning liver.
 - Functioning kidneys.
 - And fingerprints.
- At eight weeks she is moving and even responds to music.
- And at eight weeks,
 - when a sample of blood is needed,
 - a needle will be introduced to do a heel prick,
 - and that baby recoils from that prick.

That's at 8-weeks in the womb!

- You know what that sounds like?
- That sounds like my 6-year-old!
 - Loves dancing to music...
 - and hates getting shots!

Listen to me...that's a baby!

- And the heartbreaking truth
- is that almost ALL abortions
- are performed after the 8-week mark.

One argument is it's the mother's body...but that's not the mother's body!

- That baby has his own unique
 - never-before-created
 - very complex mix of the DNA of his mom and dad
 - making him a one-of-a-kind new creation.
- He does not have the same genetic code as his mother.
- When the sperm hits the egg,
 - there is new life possessing 46 chromosomes.

That's a baby.

That's a life.

That's a person, created in God's image.

TRANSITION

The Bible makes the case that life begins at conception.

- Science continues to show that babies in the womb are alive.
 - They are not their mother's body.
 - They are unique and distinct.

So, now, here's where the crazy begins.

We have to address our cultural moment.

EXAMPLE: ANIMAL EGGS

Back to our statement that humans have more value than animals. Well...

- There are national laws that make it illegal to harm,
 - sea turtle eggs.

The Bald and Golden Eagle protection act prohibits anyone

- from...here's the language...
- "molesting" eggs of a bald eagle.

Abortion is illegal on eagles and turtle babies...

- But Colorado is one of seven states
- without any term restrictions on abortion.
- As in, you can get an abortion the day before you deliver!

But that's a baby!

EXAMPLE: FETAL HOMICIDE

Did you know there are what is known as “fetal homicide” laws. And these laws hinge on the issue of fetuses killed by violent acts against pregnant women.

- If a pregnant woman and her baby are murdered,
- it will be considered a double homicide.

But in those same states...

- you can pay for,
 - or sometimes have subsidized altogether,
- an abortion with no penalty.

EXAMPLE: RAPE

One of the trump cards played in this argument is rape.

And listen:

- Rape is a serious,
- tragic,
- and horrific issue,
- and compassion and care for victims of rape is essential!

But...

- the child who was conceived
- and the killing of that child
- cannot be the price that is paid
- for someone else’s heinous sin.

The answer to the evil of rape isn’t the evil of murder!

- It’s not the lesser of two evils...IT’S EVIL!

That's a baby!

No trauma, no matter how severe and life-changing, justifies killing a baby!

And in truth, a very small percentage of abortions fit into this category. Less than 1%.

The reality of rape doesn't justify the widespread allowance of abortion.

EXAMPLE: HONESTY

So,

- because of the science,
- and the legal inconsistencies,
- at this point, the pro-choice movement
- is having to change their rhetoric.

They have essentially stopped arguing that a fetus isn't a life anymore... and moved to women's rights.

- Mary Elizabeth Williams is a wildly pro-choice advocate
 - and writes for the New York Times,
 - LA Times, and more.

Here's what she said in her 2013 article on abortion entitled "*So what if abortion ends life?*"

"I know that throughout my own pregnancies, I never wavered for a moment in the belief that I was carrying a human life inside of me. I believe that's what a fetus is: a human life. And that doesn't make me one iota less solidly pro-choice."

Did you hear that? I almost admire her for being honest! But here's her rational:

"Here's the complicated reality in which we live: All life is not equal. That's a difficult thing for liberals like me to talk about, lest we wind up looking like death-panel-loving, kill-your-grandma-and-your-precious-baby storm troopers. Yet a fetus can be a human life without having the same rights as the woman in whose body it resides. She's the boss. Her life and what is right for her circumstances and her health should automatically trump the rights of the non-autonomous entity inside of her. Always."

TRANSITION

Listen to me...that's evil!

If all life is not equal, who gets to decide which life is more valuable?

When you say you're pro-choice...

- the "choice" is to decide whose life is more important...
- and to decide, *"Well, it's MINE of course!"*
- Do you see the evil and arrogance of such a choice??

And then,

- to go on to conclude
- that because MY life
- is more valuable than the baby's life,
- I can kill it...

If you're pro-choice, listen, I love you...but this is evil!

CHURCH HISTORY

So, what do we as Christians do about this stuff?

Well, church historian Larry Hurtado gives features that made the early church unique. Those marks are:

- The early church was multi-racial in a Roman-biased world.
- The early church was about hospitality to the poor and the sick, even at the expense of their own lives.
- The early church was sexually conservative, in a culture where it was expected that men would have sex outside of marriage.
- And the early church was a community committed to the sanctity of life.

Now, Tim Keller notes that this is so ironic,

- because the marks about race and the poor sound liberal to us.
- And the sexual ethic and life ethic sound conservative.

But that combo really doesn't exist in any other historical movement.

And in his book, Hurtado says this about the early church:

“Consider the practice of discarding unwanted babies, often referred to as “infant exposure,” typically involved casting the unwanted newborn baby on a trash-heap, left to die or be collected by someone, usually to be reared for slavery. This was so much a feature of the culture of the Roman period that many otherwise caring people seem to have felt little reluctance about it.”

Sound familiar? But he goes on:

“So far as we know, the only wide-scale criticism of the practice, and the only collective refusal to engage in infant exposure in the first three centuries AD, was among Jews and then also early Christians.”

Christians, from our earliest days, have been pro-life.

- Abortion didn't exist the same way then as it does today...
- But Christians would rescue babies from trash heaps...
- saving them from slavery or death.

This is where we get the earliest orphanages.

- Christians were the first advocates against the sexual abuse of children.
- We were on the forefront of the slavery abolition movement.
- And why do you think most hospitals are named after Christian movements or saints?

The pro-life movement didn't begin in 1973...

- it's been in our DNA since day one!

APPLICATION: REPENT

So, what is our response? If the church has always been a pro-life movement, then what do we do? I have four things.

First, we **SLIDE REPENT**. We repent.

- We repent for our ignorance.
- We repent for our inaction.
- We repent for our participation.
- We repent for our indifference.

Listen, back to what I said at the very beginning of this sermon.

- For some of us today, this isn't a Trending Topic...
- this is a part of our stories.

And I would point us again to King David.

- Back in Psalm 51,
- we find a man desperate for the mercy of God.
- He has sinned in a most heinous way,
 - and begs the Lord for mercy.
- He repents.
- And God is gracious to forgive.
 - David is even known as a man after God's own heart.
- And our Bibles are ripe with stories like this!

There is no sin with more power than God's power to forgive.

- You cannot out sin the cross.
- But you must repent!

There are members of this church who have had abortions.

- I've heard their stories in my office.
- I've shed tears with them.

There are members here who have supported or paid for abortions.

- If you have stories like these in your past,
- the call is to repent...
- and God will forgive.

Author Dane Ortlund puts it like this, *"Jesus sides with you against your sin, not against you because of your sin. He hates sin. But he loves you."*

BUT repentance applies to us all.

- Many of us need to repent...
 - not for being involved in abortion...
- but by simply being indifferent about this issue!

We need to repent of just thinking it will work itself out.

- Of thinking it doesn't have much to do with us.
- Of not getting in the fight to love and serve women,
- AND to protect babies.

We'll get to that in a minute. But first, we REPENT.

APPLICATION: PRAY

Second, we **SLIDE PRAY**. This is actually the first line of the fight for us as Christians.

- I hope you've seen as I've laid out
 - the scriptural,
 - and scientific,
 - and cultural stuff,
- that this is more than a rational argument.
 - It's so far past rationale.
- This is spiritual.
- It is evil.
- And we need to pray.

We should bloody our knees in our fervor.

So, next Sunday for First Sunday Prayer we'll spend time focusing on this issue. Please come and pray with us.

APPLICATION: VOTE

Third, we **SLIDE VOTE**.

- No, I will not tell you who or what to vote for.
- But one of the ways Christians must fight for life
- is to be involved politically.

Now, voting in in our two-party system complicates this. Ok?

Like I said, Christian beliefs and practices don't fit on either side.

- So, we have to make decisions
 - as to which issues are higher on our value list,
 - and which are lower.
- And each of us has to make these value decisions.
 - And those are tough decisions!

And while we are not single-issue voters, this issue in one of importance!

So, no, I won't tell you what or who to vote for or against...

but I will say, **your biblical worldview should affect your voting.**

- At whatever level you feel compelled,
- be involved.
 - Write your representatives.
 - Run for local office.
 - At the bare minimum, exercise your right to vote.

APPLICATION: FIGHT

And fourth, we **SLIDE FIGHT**.

- We fight for the lives of babies
- AND we fight for the lives of women.

One insidious message of the pro-choice movement is that they are fighting for the rights of women...that they are pro-women.

- But they think that abortion is the best way to help women!
 - Especially poor women,
 - minority women,
 - or young women.

But that's not true! Our friend Jen Oshman, who we did a podcast with on our last trending sermon, in researching for her newest book, here's what she's found about women who've had abortions:

- There is an 81% increase in risk of mental health conditions.
- 34% increase in risk of anxiety.
- 37% increase in risk of depression.
- 110% increase in risk of alcohol use.
- And a 155% increase in risk of suicide.

You see, the truth is, **abortion isn't good for women!**

It actually creates more problems and struggles for women.

And as the church, we should be on the front lines fighting for the whole health of women AND their babies.

- So, we fight.
- We get involved.

You can support an advocacy center.

One that I would commend you to is Alternatives Pregnancy Center.

- They offer FREE services for women AND men!
- You can support them financially.
- You can volunteer your time.

Like, one of the craziest things about the Heartbeat Bill in Texas:

Is that in Texas...

- there are over 160 advocacy and care facilities for women.
- There are only 18 abortion clinics.
- You tell me who is actually for the woman!

Get involved with Alternatives.

You can get involved with YoungLives.

- This is YoungLife's ministry to teen moms.

For years Fathom hosted Littleton YoungLives here in our building.

- Walking with girls and guys through a teen pregnancy...
- and into parenthood.

And finally, one ministry that has gained a lot of traction at Fathom in the last couple years is foster care and foster family support.

- We've featured Maddy Wellum
- who is a foster advocate for Jefferson County,
- and foster parent herself.

This is being pro-life!

BLANK SLIDE

CONCLUSION

This is what Christians do.

- We repent.
- We pray.
- We vote.
- And we fight.

This is heavy, church. I know.

- While preparing this sermon,
- I can't even tell you how many times tear welled up in my eyes.
 - In sadness, yes!
 - But in anger.

And hear me, we don't need a burst of energy and fervor here, church.

- We don't need a week or two of passion here.
- We need marathon runners!

Join us next Sunday before church.

- We're gonna to pray.
- We're going to pray for our president.
- We're going to pray for Congress.
- We're going to pray for the advocacy and pregnancy centers.
- We're going to pray the Spirit of God would move in such a way
 - in the hearts and minds of Americans
 - that we might see God do something spectacular
 - around this horrific reality.

God be merciful to us.

Let's pray. **LYRICS SLIDE W/PADS**

RESPONSES:

Well, every week at Fathom we respond in 4 ways:

- COMMUNION – THE LORD’S SUPPER
- GIVING TITHES & OFFERINGS – fathomchurch.org/give
- PRAYER - fathomchurch.org/prayer
- SINGING

So, I’m going to read the Words of Institution from the Apostle Paul, we’ll take communion, and then we’ll sing:

1 CORINTHIANS 11:23–26 – WORDS OF INSTITUTION

[23] For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, [24] and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[25] In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” **TAKE**

[26] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Love you church, let’s stand and sing together.

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