

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

What One Ought To Do Is Not What Is Often Done

By John C. Robertson

The truth reveals things as God expects things to be. Law is given and the expectation is that man keep them perfectly (Lev. 11:44 and 1 Pet. 1:15-16). The apostle Paul explains that there is no excuse for violating the expectations of God (Rom. 1:20).

The Bible reveals many things about our lives that should or ought to be. Due to choice, however, the things that ought to be are often not to be. Consider these examples.

Homosexuality goes against nature and God’s expectations as revealed in his laws, however, it is freely practiced (Rom. 1:26-27).

A gray-haired man ought to have wisdom due to time, experience, and studies. Not all gray-haired men, however, are wise (Prov. 16:31).

Children ought to honor their parents with obedience. Many children, however, dishonor their parents and God by their unlawful deeds (Eph. 6:1-3).

The truth ought to produce a Christian (Acts 11:26). Often, however, the truth is not read, and a hyphenated Christian is made, i.e., a Methodist-Christian, a Catholic-Christian, Mormon, Jehovah’s Witness, Baptist, Presbyterian and so on.

When the church assembles, the saints should be there, yet people often choose not to attend (Heb. 10:24).

Lies ought to be avoided, however, people lie daily (1 Jn. 2:22).

Taking, or even thinking of taking, another’s wife or husband is not to be done. Adultery, however, has become a common occurrence (Matt. 19:9-10).

These issues illustrate the fact that God has created us all with free will. God creates and commands and permits man to make the choice as to whether he will obey or disobey. The point is that when one practices homosexuality, lacks wisdom, dishonors their parents, worships at a church that is not after the name of Christ, lies, or commits adultery they do so by their own choice.

They are lured away by their own lust (Jas. 1:14-15). God does not make anyone keep his laws. Likewise, those that choose to observe creation and know truth in obedience, do so because they see that there is an eternal reward awaiting (Matt. 25:31-46).

We are all guilty of sin (Rom. 3:23 and 1 Cor. 6:11). The good news (gospel message) is that there is forgiveness through the blood sacrifice of Christ (Rom. 7:24 and 1 Pet. 1:18-20). Forgiveness is experienced through baptism (Acts 2:38) and later prayer (1 Jn. 1:8-10).

Consider God’s laws and expectations the next time you are faced with a choice of sin or right doing. Consider the natural order of his creation.

Make the choice to do the right thing because its what you want to do.

Make the choice to do the right thing because there is a wonderful reward awaiting the faithful.

Make the choice to do the right thing because there is a fiery place called hell that awaits the rebellious. ■

“ABORTING ROE V. WADE”

By Nick S. Wallace

June 24, 2022 will go down in history as a major win for life. On this day, the United States Supreme Court overruled its earlier decisions *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, decisions which had recognized an alleged “constitutional right” to abortion, requiring states to allow the killing of the unborn. Now that full authority to ban abortion has returned to the states, there will be much public discussion and policy debate moving forward. Many will wonder if the Bible addresses this subject. The time in which we find ourselves furnishes a ripe opportunity for Christians to provide answers to the world. While the word abortion does not appear in most translations of the Bible, a simple argument against the practice can be constructed as follows:

Premise 1: Taking innocent human life is immoral.

Premise 2: Abortion is taking innocent life.

Conclusion: Therefore, abortion is immoral.

To establish the conclusion that abortion is immoral, one needs only to establish the two premises above, that taking innocent human life is immoral and that abortion is tantamount to taking human life. When engaging others on abortion, a simple first question could be, “Would you agree that killing innocent people is wrong?” The first premise appears self-evident, as most would recognize that murder is wrong. Furthermore, the Bible specifically tells us that if a person sheds man’s blood, the murderer’s blood should itself be shed by man, since man is made in God’s image (Gen. 9:6). **“Hands that shed innocent blood”** are listed among the seven abominations in Proverbs 6:16-19.¹ As John writes, Christians should exemplify love rather than murderous hate: **“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him”** (1 Jn. 3:15). While the Bible supports the taking of life judicially (Gen. 9:6; Ex. 21:12; Acts 25:11; Rom. 13:3-4), the taking of innocent life is clearly immoral.

With the first premise demonstrated, all we have left is to establish the second premise, that abortion takes innocent human life, to reach the conclusion. Over the decades, many proponents of abortion have argued that a fetus is not a living child but merely an appendage of mass; abortion just surgically removes a mother’s body part, according to this view. While not necessarily the case in the 1970s, when *Roe v. Wade* was decided, the scientific consensus among biologists today agrees that human life begins at fertilization. In one study of 5,502 biologists from 1,058 academic institutions, 95% of those surveyed (5,212) agreed with the statement that “a human’s life begins at fertilization,” with supermajorities even among biologists identifying as “very liberal.”² Biologists are learning what Christians already knew through God’s word. Jacob and Esau, before being born, are called **“children”** (Hebrew, *ben*) who **“struggled together within”** their mother, Rebekah (Gen. 25:22). The Hebrew word, *ben*, commonly means **“son.”** John the Baptist was even filled with the Holy Spirit before being born (Lk. 1:15), and his mother could feel the movements of her **“babe”** (Greek, *brephos*) upon hearing the greeting of Jesus’s mother, Mary (vv. 41-44). Therefore, an unborn child is a living human, **“fearfully and wonderfully made”** by God (Psa. 139:13-16).

“Righteousness exalts a nation, But sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34). From what we have seen, the Bible clearly condemns the taking of innocent human life (Gen. 9:6; Prov. 6:16-19; 1 Jn. 3:15), and it’s also clear that the unborn constitute living children (Gen. 25:22; Lk. 1:15, 41-44). Therefore, to practice abortion is to kill the innocent. While many practices in society can discourage us, Christians can rejoice when society makes positive changes. **“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things”** (Phil. 4:8).

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² Jacobs, S. A. (2018, August 6). Biologists’ consensus on ‘when life begins’. SSRN. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.Cfm?Abstract_id=3211703 ■

“Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding, that I may learn thy commandments” — Psalms 119:73, KJV.

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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