

## SAY YES TO LIFE

Good Morning.

We continue today with our series of the 10 Commandments with the theme of “Loving God and Loving Our Neighbor.”

Today we consider the Sixth Commandment, “Thou shall not kill.”

The commandment, “Thou shall not murder could encompass many issues of our day; abortion, capital punishment, war, suicide, or euthanasia. Jesus even broadened the commandment to include our thought life of anger towards others. Our thoughts could be considered murder, too.

That is not a very pleasant thought, is it?

Today I’ve chosen to speak about the issue of abortion.

I want to start with Galatians 6.2. It tells us *to bear one another’s burdens and you will fulfill the law of Christ.*”

I say these things today not because I’m a Democrat or Republic, liberal or conservative...I’m not a Catholic but I am a man who is a pastor who is concerned about women and families, not a man just trying to impose my will on women.

Let me explain. In 1993 I had the privilege of listening to a woman who had had an abortion about twenty years earlier and hadn’t talked about it.

She grieved and she grieved, and she grieved the death of her unborn baby.

She even had a name for him.

She had a lot of health issues but did have three beautiful children. Some can’t.

She felt very much alone and afraid, guilty and ashamed.

She was full of self-hate, self-condemnation, self-loathing

She had lost her dignity, she was depressed, and would weep uncontrollably

She felt so unworthy and worthless, felt powerless, hopeless, and helpless

She was a teenager when she had the abortion.

She was confused and really no idea what abortion was all about.

She was coerced and counseled by the family with the blessing of the pastor to get an abortion.

They all thought this was the simplest way to handle this “mistake”. She even attempted suicide, we know 28% of women with abortions do that. 27% describe themselves as alcoholics, another 25% as drug addicts According to the Elliot Institute Report 94% regret their decision.

Post Abortion Research tells us that these are common characteristics for women who have had an abortion.

So my friend could have written the book on post abortion trauma.

Becky Soske from Rapid City said, **“The act of abortion did not solve my problem. It created a whole series of problems that would not otherwise have been a part of my life...thousands of women in South Dakota have lived for years in secret pain.”**

One of my struggles is we have let these women suffer year after year in silence and we have added to that number year after year. Our silence on the subject has only prolonged the suffering.

People say abortion is good for women. From what we now know, that is a lie. It doesn't simplify life. We say it should and think it should-but it doesn't.

Listen to this...not only have we let these women be victimized; we know child abuse and neglect have risen 4x since abortion has been legalized. Infanticide has doubled.

We live in a culture that values convenience at the cost of conscience. And for the most part we in the church have conceded to the culture our responsibility to be the conscience of the culture. We just go along. We don't want to get anyone upset, do we? Or hurt anyone? Do you? I don't. Yet our silence has hurt more.

In the churches of Geddes, Belle Fourche, and South Maple, I talked about the joy of adoption but did not say one word about the misery of abortion.

My friend was the rule not the exception. I was wrong not to tell others about the choices and consequences of abortion.

A few people have tried to tell us over the years, but most of us haven't listened. Some have compared us to the churches in Nazi Germany. When the trains

heading for concentration camps rolled by the people just sang their hymns louder.

The good news is we can change that now. In Jesus Christ we can begin again **WE CAN SAY YES TO LIFE.**

Barb Frick, a woman who had an abortion as a teenager has said something very profound...I'd like you to remember this...she said like, **"I needed the forgiveness of Jesus to overcome my guilt and I needed the acceptance of the church to overcome my shame."** People need the Lord-right?

She reminded me that there are not just women who are hurting. There are husbands or boyfriends, parents, friends, relatives, doctors, nurses, teachers, and pastors that have been part of the choices or consequences of abortion. In some ways, we all need healing.

I wish I had a big billboard up here that says **GOD FORGIVES.** Well, in a sense we do, we really do don't we...it's hanging on the organ pipes.

That should remind us all that God loves us no matter what. It should remind us of God's forgiveness. That Jesus went to the cross, "endured the suffering and shame for the joy that would be found", that he took our sin, "he who was without sin, became sin, that we might become the goodness of God." It should remind us that he was bruised for inequities and wounded for our transgressions, but by his stripes we are healed. He did that for you and for me."

If any of you need to talk, we have Paula/Grace in the prayer chapel to listen. I encourage you to get more information about this issue. Abortion is not a good thing for women. If you want to talk, call. And for those who disagree with the things I've said call, write, or e-mail. Let's talk.

I've talked about these women for the most part being a victim. I want to talk about another victim, the unborn child and I want to talk about what God thinks.

People will say the Bible doesn't say much about abortion...there is plenty. The psalmist says, *"Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. You know exactly how I was made, bit by bit, How I was sculpted from nothing into something, Like an open book you watched me grow from conception to birth; All the stages of my of life were spread out before you, The days of my life all prepared before I'd even lived one day."* Psalm 139.13-16

It seems the writer understands God has something to do with his life, an active something, from conception to his birth.

That is consistent with Jeremiah's experience, God is speaking, Jeremiah 1.4, "***Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.***"

Did you catch that? BEFORE... "***Before, I formed you, I knew you.***" I would take that to mean every child is conceived in the mind of God. That means you, that means me, that means every child.

Think a moment about Mother Mary. You know the story. The angel tells her she's pregnant and she runs to cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth says, in Luke 1.44, "***as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.***" That would John the Baptist, cousin to Jesus.

In Romans 9.11(MSG) Paul gives us some insight about unborn babies. He is talking about Rebecca's children, Esau and Jacob, "***And that is not the only time a promise was made that took priority over genetics. When she became pregnant her babies were still innocent-in the womb-incapable of good or bad.***"

A promise was made, implies that there is a plan for these lives and I hope it jumps out to you that unborn babies are innocent.

That is important because the Bible talks a lot about the shedding of innocent blood. Innocent blood defiles the land, it cries out from the ground, and it is an abomination to God. That would be a great Bible Study lesson. We need to know more about that because some of us have turned our backs on these women, on the unborn babies, and on our God

Science has answered that question of life in the womb as well. We have actual pictures-we can see that in an ultra sound.

Technology tells us that once a sperm has fertilized an egg there is life. There is a complete set of DNA. There are so many days until the limbs develop, so many days before the organs develop, the heart beats after 18-21 days, brain function starts after seven weeks, and after eight weeks all body systems are present.

When we talk about that baby in the womb we say; my, he's active, or she likes to sleep, or wow can he kick. We're talking as if the unborn baby were alive... that's the point, the baby is alive.

Those in leadership are responsible for protecting "the people and our posterity." Proverbs 31.8 tells us, "*to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves.*"

We have a lot of laws that protect a lot of things but do not protect unborn babies.

There is a law that carries a fine of \$50,000 for messing with an eagle's egg. The egg may or may not be fertile, but there is a \$50,000 fine for that.

Wouldn't we be outraged if we had some 800 Columbine like deaths in our schools. There would be a public outcry and an urgency to get something done. There would be plenty of money and resources pumped into our communities to protect and provide some security, wouldn't there?

Well there were over 800 abortions in our state last year. Are we outraged? Is there a public outcry? We need a sense of urgency and we need to SAY YES TO LIFE.

#### WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO SAY YES TO LIFE?

Until 1983 I really hadn't given abortion much thought. I guess it was ok if people thought they needed to do that.

That changed in September of 1983 when we adopted Jessi. There were so many providential "circumstances". I know you would find it hard to believe the whole story. It was truly a God-thing.

It is hard to image life without Jessi; all the time at concerts, ball games, plays, and practices...all the time at church and school, and the day-to-day stuff. That is the stuff you've experienced with your kids.

There are certainly many ups and downs in family life, (you've experienced that too), but there is no question of our love for her-she is our daughter and we are very proud of her. She works hard in school, is a receptionist in a doctor's office, waits tables at Ruby Tuesday's, and plays keyboard for her church.

She loves people, will graduate in December, and has been interviewing for a teaching job in a large intercity school. (Which we confess scares us just a bit). We're a family. We've always thanked God for Jessi's birth mother. We met her two years ago. She and Jess get together from time to time. We are thank God this woman chose to give Jessi life and chose to make an adoption plan.

**SAY YES TO LIFE** and on way to do that is an adoption plan.

But as I stand before you today, I have to tell you adoption isn't enough There will be 1,000,000 teenage pregnancies this year and 2,000,000 families wanting to adopt. Out of that million there will be between 20,000-30,000 adoptions. That is the size of Aberdeen.

The tragedy probably be 400,000 abortions. That is over ½ the population of South Dakota.

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So, what else can we do to **SAY YES FOR LIFE**?

1. PRAY
2. BE INFORMED
3. ENCOURAGE ADOPTION
- 4 PROVIDE EMOTIONAL/FINANCIAL SUPPORT
5. VOTE FOR LIFE

We're going to hear the testimony of Kayla Brant-this is important  
I want you to hear again what abortion does to women, then we'll pray.

