

**God's View of Children
Psalm 127, 128**

Big Idea - God has a heart for children, and his heart grieves for the children killed by abortion.

Today's message not primarily about abortion I have preached on that subject for more than 42 years and will continue to do so. But before looking at Psalms 127, 128 let's ask and answer the question, "What is abortion?"

January 22, 1973 the US Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand. William F. Buckley wrote four days later, "It is, verily, the Dred Scott Decision of the Twentieth Century" ("The Court on Abortion," January 27, 1973), recalling the Supreme Court decision of 1857 that upheld the right of slaveholders to own slaves because slaves were not protected by the Constitution and could never become American citizens. That controversial decision helped set the stage for the Civil War.

Buckley was right. Nearly 49 years later, Roe v. Wade remains & Americans remain deeply divided on abortion. But what is it?

Education about this really matters because there is mass ignorance. Merriam Webster defines abortion as "The termination of a pregnancy after, accompanied by, resulting in, or closely followed by the death of the embryo or fetus."

Defining abortion as the "termination of pregnancy" is like defining the death of your aged father as the "termination of hospice care."

Abortion is the intentional killing of unborn babies. It happens by inserting instruments into the mother's womb pulling the babies into pieces and removing them. There are special clinics where it happens. There used to be over two thousand. Today there are about 740.

They have killed 60 million babies since abortion was legalized by the Supreme Court in 1973. Each year 1.2 million abortions happen in the U. S.

It's disgusting how phony and hypocritical the pro-abortion, pro-death, pro-choice liberals are who justify abortion! What about the dead baby's choice?

Also, while liberal politicians are constantly berating the medical community for the "disparity" in health care services provided to minorities and women of color, they conveniently fail to acknowledge that Planned Parenthood clinics are primarily in urban neighborhoods and that minorities are being disproportionately killed by abortion. If you doubt that, listen to these numbers:

"In America today, the average black woman is almost five times more likely to have an abortion than the average white woman.¹ Part of this disparity owes to the fact that, statistically, black women get pregnant more frequently than white women,² but even if we control for pregnancy, black babies are still more than three-and-a-half times more likely to be aborted than their white counterparts.³ No matter what your opinion of abortion, the fact that it disproportionality eliminates members of the minority community is a significant sociological problem.

Here's what it looks like by the numbers. According to the latest census estimates, just over 13% of the U.S. population is black,⁴ and yet somewhere between 28-38% of all U.S. abortions are performed on black babies. The Guttmacher Institute puts that number at 28%, based on voluntary 2014 survey data from 8,380 respondents.⁵ The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) places the number at 38%, based on actual counts of every 2016 abortion performed in the 30 states/districts that collect and report abortion data by race.⁶ By comparison, non-Hispanic white women make up 60% of the population but account for only 35-39% of all abortions. So abortion is really racism, so much so that

the African American leaders at Life Education and Resource Network ask, "Are we being targeted? Isn't that genocide? We are the only minority in America that is on the decline in population. If the current trend continues, by 2038 the black vote will be insignificant."

One reason I'm taking the time to discuss this in this introduction is that people need to be informed about what abortion really is. In fact, if you would like to see one for yourself,

you can watch an actual abortion online at The Center for Bioethical Reform whose website is <https://www.abortionno.org/>

[note: the video begins immediately and is very graphic.]

One of the fullest and best sites for education on abortion is Abort73.com.

https://abort73.com/abortion_facts/us_abortion_statistics/

Here is one thing we know for certain: God has a heart for children, and his heart grieves for the children killed by abortion.

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday is always observed on the Sunday closest to January 22, the day the Supreme Court handed down Roe v. Wade. In this message I want to speak about one subject that is bigger than abortion: What is God's view of children? If we know the answer to that question, we know how we should view children. Are they are a blessing or a burden?

You can tell a lot about a society by the way it treats children. In the Old Testament while the pagans sacrificed their children to pagan gods, the Jews taught their children these words: **"Hear, O Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength"** (Deuteronomy 6:4-5). They took God seriously when he said to impress these truths upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up (vv. 7-9).

God bless those adults who show the love of Jesus to the children of the world.

Our children are gifts from God. We should treasure them and not take them for granted. Jesus declared that **"whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me"** (Mathew 18:5). Then he offered this solemn warning, **"But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea"** (Matthew 18:6). Because Jesus loves children, those who harm children will answer to him.

Turn to Psalm 127-128. These two short psalms were placed together for a reason. They teach us how God feels about children and how they can be a blessing and not a burden.

1. Children are a gift from God.

"Children are a heritage from the Lord... a reward from him." (Psalm 127:3). God takes personal responsibility for the creation of life in the womb.

Genesis 30:17, "God listened to Leah, and she became pregnant."

Genesis 33:5, "The children God has graciously given your servant."

Genesis 48:9, "The sons God has given me."

Deuteronomy 7:13, "He will bless the fruit of your womb."

There is no pleasure in life that can equal the pleasure of seeing your own children grow up.

Instead of building empires, parents must first build a family. Children are a "heritage" from God, a way of preserving the family into the next generation. All of us want to be remembered after we are gone. If you are a parent, you will be remembered by the children you leave behind. That legacy will remain long after your personal achievements have been forgotten.

Sometimes a couple can't have children for various reasons. This text does not say that not having children is a sign of God's judgment. It simply declares that children are a blessing from the Lord. In holding up this truth, it's important that we say what the Bible says and not go beyond that.

What about those couples that desperately want children but cannot have them? Those couples often become parents to the children of the world. They are the ones who minister to the fatherless and the motherless. Often they adopt children, they become foster parents, they work in a crisis pregnancy center, they tutor in the inner city, they teach Sunday School, they work in Awana, and they reach out to at-risk children. So many children have no one who cares for them. God bless those adults who show the love of Jesus to the children of the world.

When you look into the face of your child, you will know that only God could have done this.

There is no pleasure in life that can equal the pleasure of seeing your own children grow up. So much like you, made in your image, a miniature of you, yet so very different. They walk like you, they talk like you, they laugh like you, and yet they definitely have a mind of their own.

Children bring God's love to us. When you look into the face of your child, you will know that only God could have done this. Time and eternity meet in the heart of a child. Each one comes bearing the fingerprint of God.

The Lord Jesus loved little children ... and so should we!

2. Children are like arrows that need to be sharpened and aimed.

"Like arrows in the hands of a warrior so are the children one's youth" (Psalm 127:4).

An arrow is small but powerful. Think what our children can do. An arrow must be sharpened well. So must we shape our children. An arrow can travel far. Who knows how far our children will go? An arrow must be aimed in order to hit the target. What are you aiming at?

Most Christian parents are playing defense with their children when they ought to be playing offense.

Most Christian parents are playing defense with their children when they ought to be playing offense. Playing defense means hoping your children won't smoke, won't drink, won't do drugs, won't sleep around, and won't get in trouble. As good as that is, that's too low a goal for Christian parents. We ought to raise our children to play offense, to learn how to change the world for Jesus Christ. We ought to pray that God would make our children "impact players" for Jesus Christ.

Sometimes our dreams for our children are too small. We want them to get an education, find a career, settle down, marry a good person, and move out of the house. That's not enough. Do you want your children to serve the Lord? It won't happen by accident. You must sharpen them like arrows and aim them in the right direction.

3. Children are the strength of the home.

"Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate" (Psalm 127:5).

This verse seems to teach that large families are a special sign of God's blessing. How full is "full?" That's like asking "How long is long hair?" The Bible doesn't specify how many children you should have, but in every place it speaks to the subject, children are always a blessing, and many children are a sign of God's favor. Not all Bible families were large, of course, but many were. This goes against the flow of much that is taught today, even in evangelical circles, but the notion of having fewer children so that you can spend more money on them is not a biblical one.

God doesn't mandate how many children a couple should have. **Quivers are like shoes, they come in many sizes.** Figure out what size quiver you have and then ask God to help you fill it up. Age and health considerations play into the decision, but motive is also important. Having fewer children may be convenient, but it may not always be the best decision. Just something to think about.

Children were the Biblical version of Social Security. They provided for their parents in their old age. If parents have loving children, their future is more secure than if they had \$5 million in the bank.

The city gate was the place where men conducted their business. It was also the place where wise men ruled and made judgments. Men would meet their adversaries “in the gate.” A father with many children has many defenders when he is falsely accused. They stand and testify to his good name. **“Your enemies don’t stand a chance against you; you’ll sweep them right off the doorstep”** (Psalm 127:5 MSG).

Here is a family united to defend itself against all attacks. Note that nothing is said about money or power or position. God’s blessing is not seen in worldly wealth or the accumulation of “things” but in a happy family that rallies to the call whenever trouble comes.

This is a word to workaholic husbands (and wives): What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and yet loses his own family? I’ve never known a man on his death-bed to say, “I wish I had spent more time in the office.” But many men say, “I wish I had spent more time with my family.” Oh, to be wise enough to learn this while there is still time to make a difference. None of this argues against having a career or working hard. But it is a plea for balanced priorities and for recapturing the highest value—the value of home and family.

No one can tell what a child may become.

Children are both a burden and a blessing. It is not untypical of God’s gifts that first they are liabilities before they become assets. The greater their promise, the more challenging will be the task of raising God’s children.

4. Children are the hope of the home.

“Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the man blessed who fears the Lord” (Psalm 128:3, 4).

The woman in this verse offers a marked contrast to the faithless woman of Proverbs 7:11, of whom it is said, **“She is loud and defiant, her feet never stay at home.”** In this Psalm the wife is attractive, alluring, charming and faithful. God’s ideal is not for a marriage to endure, but to grow happier, and better, and more enjoyable, and for a husband to still find his wife alluring to him after 20 years or 30 years or 40 years or 50 years.

The vine makes the house beautiful. It shades the verandah, cools the house, and enriches the table with ripe, succulent grapes. So is a godly wife to her husband. She is the crown of her husband who is her support and strength. He is happy everywhere because he is happiest at home.

Happy families are still possible where God's Word is taken seriously.

Olive shoots speak of great potential for the future. Mature olive trees produce fruit, wood, and valuable oil. In the same way the children given by God have vast potential for good in this world. What a privilege God gives us to be caretakers of his vessels of blessing for the world. No one can tell what a child may become.

Six Important Conclusions

1. children are a gift from God, and happy families are a gift from God. They do not come by human effort or from government policy but only from the hand of God above.
2. God's blessings are available to anyone who seeks them. The only thing God asks is that his people fear him and obey his commandments. Money and worldly success are nothing measured against the joy of a happy family where mom and dad love each other, the children respect their parents, and together they meet around the table at night to share their joys and sorrows.
3. Must recapture the high value of the family, of monogamous marriage, of abstinence before marriage, and a happy life together after marriage. We must teach our children that true love waits, that marriage is desirable, that motherhood is a noble calling, that being a godly father is more important than being an executive VP and driving a BMW, that a loving family is worth more than all the gold in Fort Knox, that sexual promiscuity leads only to sorrow and heartache, and that our children are worth all the love, all the effort, and all the investment of our time and resources.

Happy is the family where there is a godly heritage passed down across the generations.

4. Need to honor our fathers and mothers, and our grandparents and great-grandparents. Happy is the family where there is a godly heritage passed down across the generations. God bless those grandparents and great-grandparents who invest time and energy and tears and prayers into the lives of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

5. Must emphasize the role that godly fathers play and the high calling of motherhood and homemaking. Local churches are fully justified in spending large sums of money on our ministries to children and youth because our children represent the hope of the future. We must continue to train our young parents in effective child-rearing techniques and to pair them with older couples who can show them the ropes and serve as mentors and role models.

6. Need to support our single parents, step-parents, foster parents, adopted children, and those in blended families. Many times their burden is great because the happy family portrait of Psalm 128 is not fully achievable. Those individuals need our support, not our condemnation.

We live in a world that downplays the value of childhood and causes our kids to grow up too fast. It's never been easy to be a child, but today the pressures are greater than ever. I believe happy families are still possible where God's Word is taken seriously.

We can partner with the Lord Jesus Christ in the building of our homes. When we do, our families will be blessed, our children will prosper, our marriages will flourish, and Jesus Christ will be praised. And when our work on earth is done, we may look back with joy and say, "God blessed us with a happy Christian family." There is no greater reward, no better testimony, no higher goal for Christian parents. If we can say that when the day is done, we may go out of this world singing, knowing that we prevailed in the one area of life that matters most.

Psalm 128:5 ends with this prayer: "**May you live to see your children's children.**" Somewhere I read this paraphrase, "May you live to see your grandchildren playing at your feet."

How fearfully, how wonderfully we are made by the hand of Almighty God who with tender care watches over the beating heart of a baby in the womb.

I submit this as my final argument against abortion. We know the baby in the womb is alive.

How can you kill that baby? How can you support abortion?

Because we know the truth, we pray for the scourge of abortion to be lifted from our land.

May God bless all the pro-life workers, all the pro-life doctors and nurses, all the pro-life politicians, and all those who labor long hours in crisis pregnancy centers. God bless the pastors who speak out for the unborn. God bless every foster

parent. God bless all those who adopt. God bless the Sunday School teachers, Awana workers, Word of Life leaders, VBS workers, and CEF volunteers.

God bless those who love the children God loves.

Lord Jesus, you said, "Let the little children come to me." You have shown us how much children matter to you. Give us your heart for all children everywhere, born and unborn. Amen.