Fearfully and Wonderfully Made
Scripture Text: Psalm 139:13-24

Introduction

Today is Sanctity of Life Sunday. This is a day when many Christians of various denominations set aside to celebrate life. It is primarily a time to celebrate the life of the unborn, but I would like for us to consider all life as sacred – from human conception to natural death, from the womb to the tomb. All human life is precious. Life is special. Life is God-given. Were it not for God, there would not be life at all. Some try to explain away God from the existence of life. Some try to persuade us that life is an accident or that it just happened. They say life is just a random convergence of matter, time, and energy that just mysteriously happened. These people would not say it like this, but life is actually miraculous. It should not have happened at all, were it not for an Awesome Creator. But, where there is a miracle, there is a God. Where there is life, there is Life-Giver.

Psalm 139 exalts our awesome Creator as the Maker of life. It is a very personal psalm. You can notice the words “I”, “me”, “my”, and “mine” throughout the psalm. The whole psalm is a prayer by David that contains praise for his creator (vss. 1–18) and petitions for God to do something (vss. 19–24). One should notice that David’s praise of God comes first in the psalm and is given much more attention than what he petitions God to do. That should be a model for our prayers. I think we have a tendency sometimes to rush to God with our requests for whatever need or want and spend most of our time praying for that. I am not saying we should not ask God for things, particularly when we are facing troubling times, but I am saying we can take a page out of David’s book (Actually, it is God’s Book!), and spend most of our prayer praising and thanking Him.

The praise section of Psalm 139 primarily speaks of the magnificence of God. David acknowledged that God is omniscient, a theological word that means He knows everything. God knows the deepest, most secret things about us. For instance, our thoughts are some of the most private and secret things we have. God knows even those things. Even before we speak, God knows what we are going to speak. David also acknowledged that God is omnipresent, meaning He is everywhere. There is no place we can “flee from His presence.” The prophet Jonah learned this the hard way while stranded at sea in the belly of a great fish. Those who think they can run from God are profoundly mistaken. And David claimed just how powerful God is for He is the Maker of life. In verses thirteen through sixteen we find some of the most powerful words on life and its sacredness.

Knitted Together

I am going to focus primarily on four verses of Psalm 139 that speak much on the issue of the sacredness of life. I think we see this clearly in the psalm. In verses thirteen through sixteen, David meditated on the mystery God’s creation of him. In verses eleven and twelve, David wrote about the “darkness.” He claimed, “Even the darkness is not dark to [God].” Then David described a particularly “dark place” in his life where God saw and cared for
him – his mother’s womb. God’s knowledge of us goes back before our birth, when He formed us in the womb.

The language David used is that of a baby being knit together in his or her mother’s womb. I know some of you knit or sew things. Some of you have fantastic machines and skill where you can weave together a tapestry of beautiful works of cloth. That’s the sense of this passage. Life is knitted together in the womb. Life is made in a mother’s womb. But, who is the knitter? Who is the maker? According to Psalm 139, it is not nature. It is God, which means that what’s happening when a child is conceived is the work of God. God is making a human being. He is creating a masterpiece. This is similar to what Job wrote:

**Job 10:8-12** Your hands fashioned and made me...Remember that you have made me like clay...You clothed me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and steadfast love, and your care has preserved my spirit.

God knits us together. God makes us and God gives us life. This is an important truth to remember. To destroy life is to destroy God’s work. To destroy life is to destroy God’s masterpiece. He fashioned us together, made us into His very own image, and gave us breath and a soul. Therefore, all human life is precious and should be protected.

**Fearfully and Wonderfully Made**

In verse fourteen, David also wrote, “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” When we ponder the existence of life it just boggles the mind. Human life is so wonderful. The way our bodies work. The way we can reason and think. The way we can create and procreate. Life is just wonderful. Solomon declared as much.

**Ecclesiastes 11:5** As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.

In verse fifteen, David again used imagery of someone weaving a masterpiece. He claimed that his unborn body was not hidden from God. David wrote that his hidden frame was made in secret, “intricately woven in the depths of the earth.” Most commentators agree that this means God made him in his mother’s womb. God knew it when David was being made in secret because God was the One knitting him together in his mother’s womb.

**Completely Known**

David also declared that God’s knowledge of his entire life was complete, even before he was born. David wrote that God saw him, knew him, and cared for him before he was even born. God knows us before we are born and knows the complete span of our life. All our days, every one of them, were written in His book before we experienced any of them. This does not cause David to fret or mistrust God. On the contrary, David rejoiced in God’s
predetermined course of his life. This reinforces God’s sovereignty over life and death. God is the giver and sustainer of life – from birth to death. We should take comfort in that.

**Conclusion**

How shall we respond to this? I suggest we respond similarly to how David did. After praising God for His magnificence as Creator and Giver of life, David made some requests of God. But his requests were not what we might expect, such as health, riches, peace, and possessions. One cannot contemplate the glory and greatness of God without being painfully aware of one’s own shortcomings. And so David concluded his prayer like this:

**Psalm 139:23–24** Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

David’s closing request, “search me, O God, and know my heart,” echoed the opening statement of the psalm, “you have searched me and known me.” David asked the Lord to “search” him for any wicked way. Sin is such a pervasive thing that we do not always see it. Sin clings to every thought, word, and deed. So David asked God to search him. Then David asked God to know his thoughts. David had been praising the all-knowing, all-present, and all-powerful God. Such a God is worthy of our praise and He is worthy of our trust and devotion. Finally, David asked God to lead him in the everlasting way. This is the way of righteousness. It alone leads to everlasting life. The child of God who has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior has received Jesus’ imputed righteousness. God imputes Jesus’ righteousness to us. It is not our righteousness, but it is His. However, out of gratitude, we should seek to live a righteous life. We should want to be holy as our God is holy.

God is the giver of life. He is also the giver of abundant life. True life is through Jesus Christ. In John chapter ten, Jesus said that He came in order that we may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10) It is from God that we receive life, and it is in Christ that we have abundant life. At the end of John chapter six, Jesus had spoken some difficult things, as He had commonly done. After that, many of His disciples turned away and left Him. Jesus responded to the Twelve Disciples:

**John 6:67–68** So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.”

Today we celebrate life, all life, for it is sacred. God wants us to have life. As Peter confessed to our Lord, “Jesus has the words of eternal, everlasting life.” Where shall we go except to our God and Savior? He is the Giver of all life. Will you come to Him? Have you given up on trying to save myself, thinking you can do it without God? Have you turned to the only One Who can reconcile you to God? The good news of Jesus Christ is that life is precious and God wants you to have it. It is as simple as turning from ourselves and turning to Jesus Christ. This is good news, thanks be to God. Amen!