

“Life Matters” – Pr Jim Sprengle – Sanctity of Life Sunday

February 15, 2026

- I. **Hebrews 2:14-15** – ¹⁴Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
- II. **There is a ruler at work in this world** who wants you to believe that death is your friend.
 - a. You see, as our reading today tells us, the devil has the power of death.
 - i. And one of the greatest lies of satan is convincing people that death can solve their problems... relieve their suffering... and give them control... so that instead of fearing, loving, and trusting in God above all things, they begin to fear, love, and trust in death.
 - b. Our confirmation classes always cover the Ten Commandments as the First Chief Part – and the importance of the First Commandment – “You shall have no other gods.”
 - i. What does this mean? That we should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.
 - ii. I say this often, but where do we put our trust?
 1. Medicine? Money and financial security? A relationship?
 2. Whether we recognize it or not, many of us are buying into satan’s lie of trusting in death.
 - c. The truth from God Himself is that every human being has value and purpose from the moment of conception to his or her very last breath.
 - i. Hear again Psalm 139, “For You formed my inward parts; You knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made... 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.” (Psalm 139:13-14; 16)
 - ii. The Lord also said to Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.” (Jer. 1:5)
 - iii. The Lord knows us at conception and, as it says in Ephesians 2:10, “For we are His workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them.”
 - d. I suppose we’ve all heard the story or known the person... as they struggle against a progressive and fatal disease... or they lose mobility and cannot get out to do the things they love... or a baby in the womb is diagnosed with some defect or problem... or someone has terrible mental issues.
 - i. Think about the lie that the devil has people in these situations thinking... What is my purpose? What’s the point of all this? I don’t want to be a burden on others. I can’t imagine bringing a child into the world who may suffer.

- ii. In our world today, we now have ways that we can legally take control and trust in death to solve what we see as a problem...
 - 1. Assisted suicide – or the kinder softer phrase of “death with dignity” – as a person ends their life before their disease does... or in the case of the Netherlands, people with healthy bodies, but with mental disorders, are allowed to be “euthanized” or die with a doctor’s help.
 - 2. Abortion – as countries like Iceland proudly say that they’ve all but eliminated Down Syndrome – but what they mean is that nearly 100% of women who find out their baby has Down Syndrome terminate the pregnancy.
 - a. Yet, many more terminated pregnancies come without any diagnosis at all, the babies are just unwanted.
 - b. Worldometer, a statistics website, reported that 44 million abortions were performed in the year 2022, making abortion the leading cause of human death worldwide.¹
- iii. Yes, these statistics and the many ways our world embraces death are often described as a “culture of death.”

III. **We must ask the question as Christians... What does God say?**

- a. I’ve already shown the Bible verses that help us to see God’s hand in the creation of our lives from the moment of conception.
- b. In addition to that, we can go to the Small Catechism and the Third Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, “Thy will be done,” and “How is God’s will done?”
 - i. “God’s will is done when He breaks and hinders every evil plan and purpose of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God’s name or let His kingdom come.”
 - ii. You see, God’s will is to break and hinder the plans of the devil – as it says in 1 John 3:8, The reason Jesus “appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.”
- c. Over and over again, the Bible shows us that God does His greatest work through the weakness and brokenness of this world, so that Christ is proclaimed and the Father is glorified.
 - i. Whether it was Paul, burdened by his thorn... or Mephibosheth, crippled and forgotten, yet brought to King David’s table (2 Sam 9)... or Hannah, barren and grieving, yet chosen to bear Samuel, one of Israel’s greatest prophets... because, as she said, “[the LORD] raises up the poor from the dust; He lifts the needy from the ash heap.” (1 Samuel 2:8)
 - ii. And did we not just hear St. Paul remind us in 1 Corinthians 1:27-29, “God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong... so that no human being might boast in the presence of God”?

- d. Satan is doing his best to get us to believe the lie that death is a good thing, that we should embrace it, and that goes against the very Word of God - 2 Timothy 1:10 says, "our Savior Christ Jesus... abolished death," and 1 Corinthians 15:26 says, "the last enemy to be destroyed is death," and Isaiah 25:8 says "[The LORD] will swallow up death forever."
 - i. It seems pretty clear that death is not a good thing in God's eyes, and what a terrible mistake it is to trust in death over the will of God.
- e. I do not claim to know all the situations, struggles, and suffering that people go through... or the painful and difficult decisions that we make at the end of life... and many of you have walked that road with someone you love, and you know the weight of those moments... but this is what God calls us to in every circumstance: "You shall have no other gods," which means that we fear, love, and trust in Him above all things.
 - i. And even when we are weak, uncertain, or afraid, we are never abandoned... we can always turn to Him, throw ourselves upon His mercy, and trust that He holds our lives... and the lives of those we love... in His gracious hands.
 - ii. Our comfort is not found in perfect decisions, but in a perfect Savior.

IV. **You see, there is one death you can trust.**

- a. This is not the death that satan wants... or the death the world sees as a solution for everything... or the death that comes from sin.
- b. There is only one death that gives life.... the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ... which is exactly what Hebrews tells us: "He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death He might destroy the one who has the power of death."
 - i. Consider what this means for us... because Jesus willingly took on flesh and blood so that He could die... and through and by His death, He destroyed death.
 - ii. Satan's greatest weapon was turned against him as he constantly uses death to accuse us and make us afraid... to make us believe that suffering is just meaningless and life has no purpose.
- c. But our Savior entered death and came out alive... and now death no longer owns us... it no longer has the final word... we don't belong to death... we belong to Christ.
 - i. Life has value because Jesus gave up His life for all.
 - ii. From the moment we were formed in the womb... to our final breath... and even beyond the grave... our life belongs to Him.
 - iii. And because Jesus lives, death is no longer a solution... Christ is.
- d. So, whenever the devil tells you his lie that death is good... or when the world says life has no value... or when your own sinful nature decides to trust in death to solve your problems... you answer with the cross.
 - i. Christ Himself showed us how much life matters by giving up His own on the cross...

1. And He gave us something death can never take away...
2. Life.... eternal life... in His name. Amen

¹ Rocio Gomez, "Abortion Is the Leading Cause of Death Worldwide in 2018, Killing 42 Million People," Americans United for Life (04-19-24) Statistics were updated on 4/22/25.