

Sanctity of Life Sunday 2026

Contrasting Worldviews

We live in a divided culture. By that I mean that about half the population believes one thing, and about half the population believes the opposite, or something significantly different. Some people in our culture believe that human life is sacred, valuable, and worthy of protection at all stages of life, while others absolutely reject that idea. These are moral conflicts.

Today we are observing sanctity of human life Sunday. We want to celebrate and highlight the value of human life. We want to re-affirm our commitment to protecting innocent human life at all stages of development and in all conditions of life.

There are many threats today to the concept that human life is sacred and worthy of protection. These threats are largely driven by what people believe about humanity. What is the value of human life? Should human life be protected? Should we allow the termination of human life in certain circumstances? These are the big questions in this debate.

Today I want to consider the biblical worldview model of the sanctity of human life and then compare it to opposite perspective where human life is not particularly valuable. These are two competing worldviews or value systems. One protects human life, the other discards it. Upholding the sanctity of human life comes from upholding the right value system.

Let's consider first...

- I. The biblical worldview model supports the sanctity of human life.
 - A. In the current debate over these issues in our culture, who supports the idea that human life is valuable? Primarily, it is those who endorse some kind of biblical world view. And it seems like it's mostly Christians who are standing up for the rights of the unborn. Perhaps there are others—Jews, Buddhists, etc.

- B. Support for the sanctity of human life comes from the Bible, both OT and NT. A biblical worldview requires a pro-life position. Upholding the sanctity of human life is an obvious application of biblical principles. We have a moral foundation for our beliefs—the teachings of the Bible.
- C. What do we mean by “sanctity of human life”? We mean that all humans, no matter what their condition, no matter what their behavior, no matter what their level of development, are valuable and worthy of dignity and respect. We believe that primarily because the Bible teaches that it is true.

That doesn’t mean that we approve of all human behavior. It simply means we recognize all humans as valuable no matter what other conditions pertain.

- D. What are some elements of a biblical worldview that lead to this conclusion? What does the Bible teach on these issues? Let’s consider the biblical evidence demonstrating the value of human life.

- 1. Human life is the result of the special creative act of God. God originally created human life directly.

Genesis 2:7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

Humans owe their existence to the direct creative work of God.

- 2. Human life has inherent value because every human reflects the image of God.

Genesis 1:26–27 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness... So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Gen 9:6 Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

James 3:9 men ... have been made in the similitude of God.

So there is something special about human life—we bear the image of God. We are like God in certain ways. The image of God in man gives us value and dignity.

3. All human life comes from God and is sustained by God.
 - a) Psalm 100:3 *It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves*
 - b) Acts 17:25 *God gives to all life, breath, and all things.*
 - c) Acts 17:28 *For in him we live, and move, and have our being.*
4. Children are good gifts from God.
 - a) Genesis 25:21 *Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, ... and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived.*
 - b) Ruth 4:13 *the LORD gave [Ruth] conception, and she bore a son.*
 - c) 1 Sam 1:27 *For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:*
 - d) Psalm 127:3 *Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.*
5. Human life begins before birth.

Ps 139:13-16 *For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; ...My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, ...*

Jer 1:5 *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, [and] I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

6. God is personally and intimately involved in all human life.
 - a) Ps 139:13-15
 - b) Job 10:8–11 *Your hands have made me and fashioned me, An intricate unity; ... Clothe me with skin and flesh, And knit me together with bones and sinews*
 - c) Even if a child has some physical imperfections/disabilities, God still takes credit for making that child.
 - (i) Exodus 4:11 *So the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? Have not I, the LORD?”*
 - (ii) John 9:3 *Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.*
7. God shows special care and compassion for children.
 - a) Ex 21:22 If a pregnant woman is hurt so that she loses the child, the one responsible for the injury must be punished.
 - b) Mt 18:2f Jesus exhorted his disciples to have a child-like faith. He also warned them about offending a little one.
 - c) Mr 10:14 [*Jesus said*] *“Allow the little children come to Me, do not hinder them; for of such is the kingdom of God.”*
8. Human life is profoundly different from animal life.

No animal was suitable as Adam’s companion/partner. God made another human person to be suitable as Adam’s partner.

Jesus said that people are worth more than animals (Mt 10:31; sparrows).

We believe that there is a profound difference between animal and human life. Both are valuable and worthy of protection, but human life is far more valuable because humans reflect the image of God.

9. Because human life is so valuable, one who commits murder must forfeit his life.

Genesis 9:6 *Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.*

Ex 20:16 "thou shalt not kill (murder)"

- a) 18 times in the OT, God warns his people not to shed "innocent blood."
- b) Those who are guilty of shedding innocent blood must themselves forfeit their lives (Deut 19:10-13).

Trans: If you hold a Christian worldview, you must believe in the sanctity of human life. Human life is unique and valuable, of immeasurable worth and of inviolable dignity and therefore must be treated in a manner corresponding to this high moral status.

A biblical worldview compels us to protect human life, especially innocent human life. Human flourishing and thriving come when we apply biblical principles to human life.

Those who do not value human life usually do not have a proper value system.

Quote Noah Webster (d. 1843): The moral principles and precepts contained in the scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws. All the miseries and evils which men suffer from vice, crime, ambition, injustice, oppression, slavery, and war, proceed from their despising or neglecting the precepts contained in the Bible.

Sadly, many people do not accept a biblical value system. Let's move on then to discuss the worldview of those who despise or reject the precepts contained in the Bible regarding human life.

II. An unbiblical worldview denies the sanctity of human life.

- A. It's very sad but true: many people in our nation do not have a biblical worldview and actively renounce and reject such a value system. They hate God and hate biblical values. They love what God hates and hate what God loves.

John 3:20 *For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.*

- B. Hatred for God and for biblical morality is nothing new. Many people despise the biblical worldview.

Isa 5:20 *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

- C. What is the primary unbiblical worldview in our culture today?

1. I would say that the most significant and common anti-biblical worldview in our culture is secularism or naturalism. Secularism claims that nature is all that exists.

Secularism holds that there is no God or spiritual realm; mankind is the result of mindless, random, natural processes that began about 14B years ago with the Big Bang. All life amounts to molecules bumping into each other. We are cosmic accidents, matter in motion. We came from nothing and we are going nowhere.

2. I mentioned that the moral foundation for the sanctity of human life is a biblical worldview; the Bible is the moral foundation for that position. The moral foundation for a secular viewpoint is the idea that there is no God; we are not accountable to God.

This is not really a moral foundation; it's more like a *lack* of moral foundation. Nature is all there is; we are here only by accident and by chance.

3. Evolution does not produce morality. Survival of the fittest or random mutation and selection do not produce morality. Nature is "red in tooth and claw."

Richard Dawkins famously said, "The universe that we observe has precisely the properties we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference."

Secular Darwinism has no moral foundation/framework. Without a moral foundation, people feel free to engage in all manner of wicked behavior. Why not, if we are just animals? Why not indulge our appetites if morality is not real?

The Big Bang is a something-from-nothing story. Life came from non-life. Mankind arose from ape-like ancestors. There is nothing special about humans that distinguish them from other animals. That idea does not provide a foundation for morality.

4. How did this secular viewpoint come about? What is the history of this debate?

- a) Up until about 300 years ago, most people were theists; they believed in God or gods. The authority was external to ourselves; we obey the commands of God.

For about 1500 years, Christianity formed the foundation for morality in western civilization. Cultural leaders, for the most part, at least publicly, upheld the idea that we should follow God's commands.

- b) But then with the advent of the Enlightenment, cultural leaders decided that reason, logic, and science would be a better foundation for morality. Human life would turn out better if people rejected the old superstitions and allowed science and reason to tell them right from wrong. The human mind would establish the basis for morality. Scientific experts would teach us how to live and flourish.

That was a popular view up until the 20th century. Human reason and science gave us wars, atom bombs, Communist dictators, and millions of dead bodies. So people started considering other options. Maybe the path to human flourishing was not science and reason.

- c) Today, western culture is largely “post-modern,” meaning that the authority is the self. One’s own personal feelings are most important, most authoritative, most authentic. The highest priority is to do what you feel. Act on your own inner desires; fulfill your appetites; follow your heart.

The author, Carl Truman, calls this mindset “expressive individualism.” People view themselves as autonomous beings whose primary purpose is to fulfill their inner feelings and desires, rather than fulfilling obligations to family, church, or community. The highest good is to be true to yourself; be your authentic self.

Right and wrong come from inner personal feelings about yourself, not from traditional authorities. Success is found in realizing your own personal desires, not in meeting your obligations. Identity comes from how you feel about yourself, not from family, religion, work, or community.

- 5. The anti-Christian worldview would say that every individual has to determine morality for himself.
 - a) Morality is a human invention. The animals have no morality. Early humans developed morality because they had to live in tribes, and morality evolved because people had to get along with each other in order to survive.
 - b) But on this viewpoint, nothing is absolute; all moral considerations are nothing but personal preference. One opinion is as good as another.
 - c) The greatest value is freedom to do whatever you want to do. The greatest good is to follow your own instincts, follow your heart, indulge your appetites. The greatest “sin” is restricting anyone from doing what he wants to do.

- d) Since morality is just opinion, I should not force my morals on anyone else. I should be free to express my inner feeling without being judged. No one should judge me for my behavior. There should be no restrictions for anyone who consents to any behavior.
- 6. On the secular view, there is no existence after death to be concerned about. No heaven, no hell, no punishment, no reward—nothing. You cease to be and have no conscious existence whatever after death.

It doesn't matter how you lived on earth. There is no final justice, no judgment. Nothing to gain, nothing to lose. Don't worry about your eternal destiny; you don't have one. Live for today.

Oldies song: Take the most from living, have pleasure while we can ... And don't worry 'bout tomorrow,

D. What does the secular viewpoint tell us about the meaning/value of human life?

- 1. Human life is no more or less valuable than any other form of life. We all got here by accident or chance; every living thing is the product of natural evolution. Life came from non-life. Humans are no different from any other form of life. In fact, humans are a lot worse than most other forms of life.
- 2. There is nothing immoral about terminating human life in some cases. Some human life is more valuable than other forms.
 - a) Whether a human is valuable, on the secular view, depends on many factors. Secularists would say that a person has value if
 - (i) Someone wants it or values it.
 - (ii) It is relatively normal/healthy.
 - (iii) It has some capacities or abilities.
 - (iv) It can contribute something to society.
 - (v) It is convenient.

If a human does not have these qualities, then it's either not a person, or else it has no value. Either way, terminating the life of such an individual may be the best option. It would be most convenient.

- b) If a pregnant woman does not want to have the baby she is carrying, she should be able to get rid of it. The baby is going to be inconvenient, expensive, and painful. If the mother would rather not have the baby, then she simply has it killed.

This would be especially true for children who are found to have serious physical handicaps, e.g., autism, Down's Syndrome.

- c) If an elderly person is close to death and experiencing an unpleasant life, the state should provide the means for him to end his life legally. Or if a person decides he no longer wants to live, doctors should be able to terminate his life. I.e., assisted suicide or euthanasia would be perfectly acceptable on that worldview.
- d) If a couple has produced a number of fertilized eggs through the IVF process that they don't need or want, those viable fetuses can be terminated.
- e) There is not much consideration of the weak and vulnerable in the secular point of view. There is no moral foundation that extends value and dignity to human life under secularism.

The contrast between the biblical view and the secular view could hardly be more stark. The biblical view says that man has value and dignity because every human reflects the image of God. God has a direct interest in humanity, and it is morally evil to terminate innocent human life. Those who hold a biblical worldview recognize the sanctity of human life.

The secular viewpoint says that there is no ultimate value for human life. Man is an animal, the result of mindless, purposeless, random natural events. We are little more than molecules in motion. As such, there is nothing immoral about terminating human life in some cases. Morality is little more than opinion. Since the highest goal is to please oneself, there is little room for considering the desires of others, especially if others get in the way of one's plans.

Obviously, the correct view is the one that values and protects human life. That view is correct because it most closely aligns with God's character and word. We know that human life is sacred because God tells us that it is. We are obligated to value human life in all conditions and at every stage of life.

And so we affirm our commitment to the sanctity of human life. We are obligated to treat other people with dignity and basic respect because every human is made in the image of God.