



PROTECT AND SERVE

God created human beings in His image and all human life is important to Him.

GENESIS 1:27; 9:1-7; MATTHEW 5:21-22

There are many Bible verses that are clear in how we should value human life. Today there are murders, abortions, bullies, harassment, and all kinds of verbal and physical abuses. There is so much evil in this world. We need to replace evil with LOVE. Only God's LOVE can cause us to value human life and to do good to other people.

God created all human beings in His own image. God wants each of us to have the same attitude as Him by showing His love to all humans. We need to value all human life in the same way God does. We must show love, kindness, goodness, mercy, and patience to all humans in this world.

GENESIS 1:27; 9:1-7;

MATTHEW 5:21-22

Genesis 1:27 “So God **created** **A** human beings **in his image**. **B** In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female.”

9:1 “Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Have many children; **grow in number and fill the earth**. **C** 2 Every animal on earth, every bird in the sky, every animal that crawls on the ground, and every fish in the sea **will respect and fear you**. **D** I have given them to you. 3 “Everything that moves, everything that is alive, is yours for food. Earlier I gave you the green plants, **but now I give you everything for food**. **E** 4 But you **must not eat meat that still has blood in it**, **F** because blood gives life. 5 I will demand blood for life. I will demand the life of any animal that kills a person, and I will demand the life of anyone who takes another person’s life. 6 “**Whoever kills a human being will be killed by a human being**, **G** because God made humans in his own image. 7 “As for you, Noah, I want you and your family to have many children, to grow in number on the earth, and to become many.”

Matthew 5:21 “You have heard that it was said to our people long ago, ‘You must not murder anyone. Anyone who murders another will be judged.’ 22 But I tell you, if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be judged. If you say bad things to a brother or sister, you will be judged by the council. And if you call someone a fool, you will be in danger of the fire of hell.”

- a. The Hebrew word for create is only used for God’s activity, not for human work. The word is used three times in this verse.
- b. Humans are the only part of creation that have God’s image.
- c. God blessed Adam and Eve with the same responsibility in Genesis 1:28.
- d. God ~~ad~~ rmed humans will rule over the animals, as He said in Genesis 1:26.
- e. Before Noah’s time, people ate only plants. After the ~~fl~~ood, God permitted them to eat animals too.
- f. Some people in history thought they could make themselves stronger by eating blood. God does not allow this.
- g. When a person kills another human, they show they do not respect that person or God and His creation. God set the punishment for a murderer in Numbers 35:16.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. What makes humans different from everything else on earth?
2. What did God create in His image? Why is it important to know this?
3. What instructions did God give Noah?
4. Why does God want human life protected?
5. What does God command if anyone kills a human?
6. What happens to a person who is angry with someone or calls a person a fool?
7. What can a believer do to show that they value human life?
8. In what ways can a believer help others to show that human life is very important?

BIBLE SKILL: *Verses about Human Life*

Read the verses below and write what they teach about human life.

Psalm 139:13-14 _____

Psalm 8:5-8 _____

Jeremiah 1:5 _____

John 15:12-13 _____

Ephesians 4:32 _____

IN MY CONTEXT

As believers, we must tell everyone the importance of every person's life because they were created in God's image.

We need to protect human life. We need to be a voice for those who can't speak for themselves or can't protect themselves. God uses us to help them.

All believers must respect all human life in their daily actions. We need to teach our children and other people to love, respect, and help others.

How do you value life and tell others the importance of every human life?

In what ways can you speak up to protect someone who can't speak or help themselves?

List your neighbors and co-workers. What can you do this week to show each person you listed that you value them?

MEMORY VERSE

So God created human beings in his image. In the image of God he created them. He created them male and female. - Genesis 1:27

DAY ONE

Read Genesis 1:27, beginning to memorize this verse.

It is important to remind ourselves that God created every person here on earth in His image. Who created the baby inside the mother? God is the Creator. God created humans so that each one of us could have a personal relationship with Him. God loves and cherishes every human.

As believers, we have the Holy Spirit living in us. Our goal is to obey God. God commands us to love all people. We need to love and value every human. Every human has a soul. Our goal is for lost souls to know God and receive the Holy Spirit. We need to show love and kindness to all people; through our actions and witness they can come to know God. If we are not nice to people and cause them to feel uncomfortable, how can they learn about God? We need to show respect and kindness to all people in our actions and in our words.

In what ways can you show God's love to all people?

KEY DOCTRINE: *Created in His Image*

God made man and woman in His own image. God made them in their unique personality and their skin color. Every human is sacred to God. Every person in every race is created by God with full dignity (honor) and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

DAY TWO

Read Genesis 9:1-4, comparing it with Genesis 1:28-30.

God gave instructions to Noah and his sons. Some of the instructions are the same as those He gave to Adam and Eve. But God changed some of the instructions about eating animals. One responsibility for Noah and his sons was to take care of all animals on land, in the air and sea. The second was to have many children to fill the earth. Before the flood, people only ate plant foods such as vegetables, nuts, seeds, and fruits. They couldn't eat meat. After the flood, God told people they could eat meat but the blood must be removed first.

Blood means life. All animals and human bodies have blood so they can live. In the Old Testament, God used blood for forgiveness of sin through animal sacrifice. The blood of the animal was a substitute for the sinner to receive forgiveness. Because of Jesus and the life of His blood, we who are dead to sin receive eternal life and forgiveness. Now we see why the life of the blood is very important to God. So God teaches His people not to eat blood from the meat. "No matter where you live, you must not eat blood from any bird or animal" (Lev. 7:26).

If blood means life, how do you respond to the importance of Jesus' blood shed for you on the cross?

DAY THREE

Read Genesis 9:5-7, summarizing God's instructions.

God set up an agreement with Noah and his sons that any animal or any human that killed a human would be put to death. Think of an example of a dog that attacked and killed a person. We must kill that dog because that dog tasted blood and will be likely to kill another person. It is best for that dog to die. God wants that animal, which killed a person, to die in place of the person that died. It was the same with a human who killed another human. A murderer who killed must die in place of another human who died. Anyone or any animal that takes a human life by killing him or her will have to die.

The point is that we must respect, cherish, and protect human life. We need to train and teach our children and other people how important every human life is. If other humans can't protect themselves - such as babies inside the mother's womb - then we must be a voice for them. We must find ways to help others to protect human life.

In what ways can you respect, cherish, and protect human life? In what ways can we help protect those who can't help themselves?

DAY FOUR

Read Matthew 5:21-22, circling the word "angry."

Jesus talked with people who knew the law. They knew murder was wrong. They knew the commandments God gave Moses. Jesus reminded them that they had the law and anyone who murdered would be judged. Jesus explained to all people that angry words, speaking curses, and name-calling were as bad as murder and they would be judged the same for both.

Everyone experiences anger at someone in their lives. We get angry at our family, friends, co-workers, strangers, and brothers and sisters in Christ. Anger causes us to use mean words and it also causes us to get into physical fights. We must use our self-control to control our anger (Eph. 4:26). When you become angry it is important to control your temper, your body movements, and what you say. Also it is important for your anger to go away before the day is over. Always be willing to forgive, forget, and start new.

When you become angry, do you control yourself? In what ways can you prevent your anger from being out of control?

How can we express our anger in a godly way?

DAY FIVE

Read Matthew 5:21-22, noticing the importance of words.

Words we say and sign are very important. Jesus explained that those who give insults and call names will be judged.

Ugly words, insults, name-calling, and negative words are not a part of God's language. As believers, we should never use those words. We need to start changing the way we talk by using good words, lovely words, kind words, positive words, and helpful words.

We should use "words that will help others become stronger" (Eph. 4:29). That is how we should talk. Our goal is for our words to always lift people up and never put them down. We need to teach our children and other people to talk like that. We can be an example to others by using our words wisely.

**When have you been encouraged by someone's positive words to you?
What are some positive words you can use to show respect to others?**

CONNECT AND SHARE

Think about what you have learned from Genesis 1:27; 9:1-7; Matthew 5:21-22. Meet with one or two members of your study group to find ways to live what you have learned.

In what ways can your church show how important human life is?

What can you do when you see conflict in your church?

**How can you be an influence in your church with the way you talk?
Do you lift people up with words of encouragement, positivity, and love?**

PROTECT AND SERVE

Genesis 1:27;9:1-7; Matthew 5:21-22

PLAN AHEAD

Pray for group members. Pray they will gain a deeper respect for human life.

Recruit three volunteers to sign one of the three sections of Scripture for the session.

Identify Christian organizations in your city and state that help pregnant women and children.

Be prepared to answer questions members may have from the readings for last week.

FOCUS ATTENTION

EXPLAIN: *Each January thousands of people participate in pro-life rallies across the country. In addition, many Christians honor Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on the third Sunday in January. These events help us remember that God values all human life, from beginning to end. It is also a time for us to share this news with others.*

There are many actions that show disrespect for human life. Examples include: murder of any kind, abortion, euthanasia (killing someone who is suffering or dying), helping someone kill himself, selling people to become slaves, and bullying. Today we will learn more about what God thinks of human life.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. In His Image (Genesis 1:27)

CALL FOR the first volunteer to sign Genesis 1:27. **ASK:** *What does it mean to be made in God's image?* **Allow for discussion.** **EXPLAIN:** *There are different ideas of what it means to be made in God's image. It may mean we share some of His characteristics. Humans have a mind and are able to think. We have a will and can make decisions. We have emotions. When we become believers we become*

more like God as we grow in holiness (Eph. 4:24) and in knowledge (Col. 3:10). Most importantly, because we are made in God's image, we are created to have a personal relationship with God.

LEAD the group to discuss questions 1-2 from Explore the Text.

2. To Be Protected (Genesis 9:1-7)

EXPLAIN: After the flood, God told Noah what to do. He included the punishment for an animal or person who kills another person. **ASK** the second volunteer to sign Genesis 9:1-7, directing the group to watch for God's directives.

POINT OUT the notes beside the text.

DISCUSS questions 3-5 from Explore the Text. **EMPHASIZE** again the reason human life is so important is because we are made in God's image. Proverbs 14:31 says, "Whoever mistreats the poor insults their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God." The way we treat others shows how we feel about our Creator.

Many states in the United States have laws permitting capital punishment. This means the government can kill a person who murders another. Some Christians disagree about capital punishment. Some feel it is right because of the biblical law. Some feel the grace taught in the New Testament has more authority. However, the point is this—God values human life and expects us to do the same.

3. In Action and Attitude (Matthew 5:21-22)

EXPLAIN: When Jesus came, He took the idea of respecting human life even further. Our actions should show respect for life. Jesus added the requirement that our thoughts and attitudes should also show respect for life.

ASK the third volunteer to sign Matthew 5:21-22. **LEAD** the group to discuss questions 6-8 from Explore the Text. We may all be able to say we never killed anyone, but most of us are guilty of having mean thoughts about someone. We have all shown disrespect in our attitudes. We all need God's forgiveness.

IN MY CONTEXT

REVIEW the main points from In My Context and lead the group to discuss the questions. Pray together, asking God to help the group show respect for His creation.

ENCOURAGE members to do the Bible Skill and the daily readings this week. Also **REMIND** them to find someone to meet with for Connect and Share.