



Sanctity of Human Life

VALUE ALL

Jesus values all people

PROVERBS 24:11-12; MARK 10:46-49

FIRST THOUGHTS

This is the **Sanctity of Human Life** session for this quarter. These lessons help us understand what the Bible tells us about the value of each person's life. In some nations, if a baby is born deaf that baby is not allowed to live, or that baby does not have an opportunity to go to school. God loves all people, deaf or hearing, rich or poor, good or bad. If God values all people then so should we. Since God values life, we must value life.

UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT

The Book of Proverbs is a collection of many short wise statements. Many of those statements remind us of how God cares for every person. The verses from the Gospel of Mark tell about a time when Jesus showed His love for one person. The Gospels have many other examples of how Jesus cared for everyone.

EXPLORE THE TEXT (PROVERBS 24:11-12;

MARK 10:46-49)

1. A Call to Protect Life (Proverbs 24:11)

Much of the Book of Proverbs was written by King Solomon. God gave Solomon great wisdom. He gave much truth in only a few words.

VERSE 11.

¹¹ *Save those who are being led to their death; rescue those who are about to be killed.*

Solomon did not explain who was about to be killed. He may have meant people who were guilty of a crime. Or, he may have meant someone who was hurt by another person. The Hebrew language suggests that we must save them if it is possible for us to do it.

The message for us is that we must not neglect helping someone who needs us. Jesus illustrated this with the story we call “The Good Samaritan” (Luke 10:25-37). In that story, two Jewish religious leaders refused to help a man who had been robbed and left beside the road. But a man who was a Samaritan, not a Jew, stopped and gave the man some first aid. Then the Samaritan found someone to take care of the man.

Today, we often see people on the street with a home-made sign telling us they need money for food for their children. We know that some of these people are fakes. But when we feel the Holy Spirit urge us to help, we should do what we can.

BIBLE SKILL: *Comparing Bible Stories*

The Bible has other stories about people who helped a person when someone was trying to kill him or her. Read about how Reuben saved the life of his brother, Joseph in Genesis 37:1-31. Jeremiah’s life was saved because of a priest named Ahikam (Jeremiah 26:1-24). Jonathan, the son of King Saul, helped David to escape from the king (1 Samuel 20:1-42). God called the prophet Ezekiel to warn the people about their sin. God said, “Suppose I say to the wicked: ‘Wicked people, you will surely die,’ but you don’t speak to warn the wicked to stop doing evil.

Then they will die because they were sinners, but I will punish you for their deaths. But if you warn the wicked to stop doing evil and they do not stop, they will die because they were sinners. But you have saved your life" (Ezekiel 33:8-9).

Deaf people who are not Christians are in danger of eternal punishment. It is our duty to do all we can to help them find Jesus as their Savior. Paul wrote, "The Lord's servant must gently teach those who disagree. Then maybe God will let them change their minds so they can accept the truth. And they may wake up and escape from the trap of the devil, who catches them to do what he wants" (2 Timothy 2:25-26).

A Deaf man, Fred, loved Jesus. He wanted everyone to know Jesus, but Fred did not know how to do that. He asked his Deaf friends at church what they signed to a person to tell them how to be saved. Most of the group said they felt the same as Fred. They wanted to, but they did not know how.

If you were in that Bible study group, could you explain to them how to tell a person how to become a follower of Jesus? YES NO.

What would you say to explain how a person becomes a follower of Jesus?

Talk about this with your Bible study group this week.

Do you know of a person you can tell about Jesus?

That is also very exciting. Even if the person does not receive Jesus at that time, you planted a seed that the Holy Spirit can use.

2. A Warning Against Inaction (Proverbs 24:10,12)

VERSE 10.

¹⁰*If you give up when trouble comes, it shows that you are weak.*

The Hebrew word for trouble has the idea of testing our character and our willingness to continue to be faithful to God's commands. Trouble shows our real spiritual strength. Verse 5 in this chapter tells us, "Wise people have great power, and those with knowledge have great strength." We are weak when we have not grown spiritually and when we do not learn God's wisdom from His Word.

The prophet Isaiah wrote, "God gives strength to those who are tired and more power to those who are weak. Even children become tired and need to rest, and young people trip and fall. But the people who trust the LORD will become strong again. They will rise up as an eagle in the sky; they will run and not need rest; they will walk and not become tired" (Isaiah 40:29-31).

Stephen was one of the seven men chosen to become a deacon. He would not give up his faith and the religious leaders threw stones at him until he died (Acts 6:8-7:60). When we have difficult times, we need to be like Stephen and not give up.

Do you remember what Peter did when Jesus was crucified? He denied Jesus. He said he was not one of Jesus' disciples (John 18:16-27). If you were in Peter's place at that time, would you be faithful like Stephen or deny Jesus like Peter did?

VERSE 12.

¹²*If you say, "We don't know anything about this," God, who knows what's in your mind, will notice. He will reward each person for what he has done.*

We must not pretend we do not see someone in need. Maybe God can use us to save him. God knows our hearts and what we do. God will be our judge. It is always easy to make excuses when we do not want to do something. We can tell other people, "I forgot," and they will tell us it is OK, but God knows what we are thinking (Proverbs 16:2; 21:2). "I, the Lord, look into a person's heart and test the mind. So I can decide what each one deserves; I can give each one the right payment for what he does" (Jeremiah 17:10).

God looks into our hearts. He knows when we see someone who needs our help. The Holy Spirit will help us understand that person's need and how we can help. Satan will try to keep us from seeing the need or give us excuses for not helping.

This is Sanctity of Life Sunday. One important thought we have on this Sunday is the value of a baby even before the baby is born. If we know that God values unborn babies but we do nothing to protect these babies, are we guilty of acting like, "We don't know anything about this . . ."

What kind of excuses do people make for not helping other people with physical or spiritual needs? Write the word "yes" beside any

excuse that God will accept.

___ I am too busy.

___ I don't have enough money for my own needs.

___ I'm Deaf and that person is hearing. I can't help.

___ Someone else can do it better than I can.

___ I'm not sure I understand what this person needs.

3. An Example Set (Mark 10:46-49)

Read this same story in Matthew 20:29-34 and Luke 18:35-43. Matthew's story tells us there were two men. Mark remembered one man's name and the name of his father.

VERSES 46-47.

⁴⁶Then they came to the town of Jericho. As Jesus was leaving there with His followers and a great many people, a blind beggar named Bartimaeus son of Timaeus was sitting by the road. The city of Jericho is only about fifteen miles from Jerusalem. Jesus was on His way back to Jerusalem for the Passover. Many other people were on that road.

⁴⁷When he heard that Jesus from Nazareth was walking by, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

We do not know how Bartimaeus knew who Jesus was. Maybe he heard what the people said as they walked by him. Somehow he knew that Jesus was from the family line of King David. People sometimes called Jesus the Son of David.

Bartimaeus probably also knew that the Messiah would help blind people to see (Isaiah 35:4-5; Luke 4:16-19). Maybe Bartimaeus did not understand everything about the Messiah, but he understood enough to ask Jesus to heal him. So he yelled above the noise of the crowd so Jesus could hear him. His faith led him to act.

KEY DOCTRINE: *Jesus is the Son of David*

It is important to identify Jesus as the Son of David as well as the Son of God. The title "Son of David" is necessary to show Jesus was the Messiah expected by the Jews.

Matthew began his Gospel in this way: "This is the family history of Jesus Christ. He came from the family of David, and David came from the family of Abraham." (Matthew 1:1). This title is used in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, but not in John's Gospel.

Find these verses in your Bible and write the name of the person who called Jesus the Son of David.

Matthew 9:27 _____

Matthew 15:22 _____

Matthew 20:30-31 _____

Matthew 21:9 _____

Matthew 21:15 _____

Matthew 22:41-42 _____

VERSE 48

⁴⁸ *Many people warned the blind man to be quiet, but he shouted even more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

Can you see this picture? Bartimaeus is only one man against many people. But he did not stop calling to Jesus. The people may have been afraid that a Roman soldier would hear the words *Son of David* and think the Jews were trying to oppose Rome.

VERSE 49

⁴⁹ *Jesus stopped and said, "Tell the man to come here." So they called the blind man, saying, "Cheer up! Get to your feet. Jesus is calling you."*

Look at the difference between Jesus and all the people. They told Bartimaeus to stop. Jesus asked him to come to Him. Verses 50-52 tell us that Jesus healed Bartimaeus and Bartimaeus became a follower of Jesus that day.

In a Deaf Bible study group, a visiting Deaf preacher asked how many Deaf people lived in that community. The Bible study leader said only ten

people lived in the community and all of them were in the group that day. “No other Deaf people live in this area,” she said. Then one member said, “I know of one Deaf boy that goes to the hearing high school, but he doesn’t sign.” Another said, “And we know about Mrs. Jones, but she is very old and not able to come to church.” Then another said, “And we all know that terrible Peggy. She has men visiting her every night.” The visiting Deaf preacher went around the community that afternoon and found over fifteen more Deaf people. The Bible study group did not include them because “they are not the kind of people we are.”

If Jesus valued the life of this one blind man, then we must also learn to value the life of every person.

Jesus is always our best example of how to act.

What are some examples of ways we can show others we value them?

IN MY CONTEXT

In your mind, picture the blind man beside the road and you know he needs help. What will you say to him? Will you tell him to be quiet, or will you gently take his hand and lead him to Jesus?

Think about your experiences this past week. Can you think of people who needed help? Make a list of four people you saw this week who had physical or spiritual needs. If you do not know their names, just write a few words to remind you who they are.

How can you pray for the people you listed?

How can God use you to help them?

What kind of help can we give people? Put an “x” beside the things you may be able to do to help someone this week.

- ☐ Pray for them.
- ☐ Tell them where they can get help.
- ☐ Give them money or something that will help them.
- ☐ Tell them about Jesus, or give them a Bible they can understand.
- ☐ Invite them to your church.

MEMORY VERSE

If you give up when trouble comes, it shows that you are weak.

—Proverbs 24:10

Sanctity of Human Life

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PROVERBS 24:11-12; MARK 10:46-49

PLAN AHEAD

- ❑ Pray for the people in your group. Pray that they will understand that all life is precious to God.
- ❑ Resources: Find organizations in your city that help pregnant women and children. Check out "<http://www.erlc.com>" for information and articles related to protecting life.
- ❑ Story: Read the story of Jesus healing the blind man and practice signing the story so that you can sign it for the group. You could also ask a person in your group to sign the story.

FOCUS ATTENTION

How did **Sanctity of Human Life** Sunday start? Ronald Reagan made a presidential proclamation that January 22, 1984, would be National Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. That day was the 11th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the law that made abortion legal in the United States. Many Christians keep the third Sunday of January as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday each year to remember that all human life is important to God.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

(PROVERBS 24:10-12; MARK 10:46-49)

1. A Call to Protect Life (Proverbs 24:11)

Invite a person in your group to sign the verse. Discuss what people Solomon could have meant. Emphasize that unborn children cannot

defend themselves. Ask: *What kinds of things can we do to protect the unborn children?* Share the resources you found related to helping pregnant mothers and their children.

Discuss: *In the United States it is legal to have an abortion. Does this mean that abortion is OK? Can you think of other things that are legal but do not please God?*

2. A Warning Against Inaction (Proverbs 24:10,12)

Invite a person in your group to sign the verses. Also invite someone else to sign Galatians 6:9. Discuss what these verses mean. Proverbs 24:10 and Galatians 6:9 encourage believers to keep doing good things. We should not give up. Proverbs 24:12 reminds us that God knows our hearts. Invite someone to also sign Matthew 16:24.

Discuss: Ask members if they have seen people on the road with homemade signs saying “Will work for food.” Ask: *Do we pretend we do not see them? How do we know if they are fake or really need help? What about others who need help? What kinds of excuses do we use to avoid helping?*

3. An Example Set (Mark 10:46-49)

Sign the story from Mark 10 or ask a volunteer to sign it. Discuss Jesus’ actions with Bartimaeus. Ask: *How do we know Jesus cared for him?* Allow members to share other Bible stories that show Jesus’ love and concern for others. Examples could include the following: Jesus healing the Deaf man (Mark 7:31-37), raising the **widow**’s son from the dead (Luke 7:11-15), allowing the children to come to Him (Matthew 19:14).

Discussion: *How can we follow Jesus’ example?*

SUMMARIZE AND CHALLENGE

The most important way we can help others is with their spiritual needs. Deaf people need to know about Jesus and salvation. Lead members to share their answers from “In My Context” (page 63). Encourage members to make a plan to help the people they know with spiritual and physical needs. Take time in class to pray for the people mentioned. Pray for organizations that help people with food and **shelter**. Ask God for wisdom and boldness to share Christ with others.

It is possible that this session will cause some Christians to feel guilty. There may be a person in your group who had an abortion. Perhaps others have ignored people in need. Remind your group that God forgives us and cleans our hearts and lives (1 John 1:9). We can have a new start.