

H4

STATEMENT ON THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

God's Intention: Creation

Human life is created by God and is good. Since we are uniquely created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and formed by God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13–16), we hold to the sanctity of all human life (Genesis 9:6; Matthew 6:26). As best as we understand, human life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13–16; Jeremiah 1:4–5). It also lasts beyond death into eternity (John 5:28–29; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52; 2 Corinthians 5:8–10). God gives life and breath to everyone (Acts 17:25), calling us to value equally the dignity of every individual life in its entirety, which compels us to love and have compassion for all peoples of the world (2 Corinthians 5:14–15).

Our Distortion: Fall

Sin affects every aspect of human life (Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 5:12) and devalues life (Amos 2:6–7; James 2:1–4; Galatians 5:14–15). God exposes and condemns these distortions through the life-affirming nature of the Law, as seen in the Ten Commandments that prohibit life-denying practices (Exodus 20:1–17). This degrading of human life leads to dehumanizing practices (e.g., abortion, racism, injustice, abuse, suicide, human trafficking, genocide, murder, and euthanasia). Since each person is made in the image of God, we grieve such practices.

Our Redemption: Jesus

Our life-giving mission is to proclaim Jesus in word and deed to the whole world (2 Corinthians 5:20; James 1:27). As our Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, Jesus brings new and abundant life (John 3:3, 10:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17), which transforms our distorted view of human life (2 Corinthians 5:16; Romans 12:2). We affirm the dignity of all people, especially the vulnerable and overlooked (e.g., the unborn, foreigners, the mentally ill, the poor, the elderly, widows, orphans, and the incarcerated (Exodus 23:9; Matthew 25:36, 40; James 1:27, 2:1–4; Hebrews 13:3). As the Church, we proclaim Christ by making disciples, and we express His love by caring for people (e.g., disaster relief, refugee care, assistance for individuals with disabilities, foster care and adoption, community development, and elder care). At every opportunity, we seek to be peacemakers in our world (Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18).

We advocate for those who cannot speak for themselves (Proverbs 31:8–9; Matthew 25:45), protecting and honoring all human life. We affirm the value of every person from the womb to the end of earthly life, without exception. Therefore, the gift of life should be cherished and not taken prematurely. For the terminally ill, the ability to extend life artificially does not create a moral imperative to extend it indefinitely. Such decisions call for discernment as well as trust in the providence of our God.

Ultimately, God is the giver of life and numbers our days (Deuteronomy 32:39; Psalm 139:16; Acts 17:25–26).

Our Hope: Consummation

Our hope for final victory over death is Jesus! Since Jesus rose from the dead and will return to restore all righteousness (Matthew 24:30; Titus 2:13–14), all will rise bodily from the dead and those who trust in Christ will live with Him forever (John 5:28–29; 1 Corinthians 15:20–24; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18). Life, not death, will ultimately prevail, and Jesus will wipe away every tear from our eyes (Revelation 21:4), fully vindicating the sanctity of life (Revelation 22:1–5).