

A Biblical Perspective on Children

- **INTRO:**
 - We were ALL children at one point or another!
- **What does the Bible Say about Unborn Children?**
 - Children are humans, made in the image of God, from the moment of conception (Ps. 139:13-16)
 - Psalm 139:13-16—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. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. 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.
 - Children are MADE BY GOD in HIS IMAGE.
 - Nobody is more PRO-CHOICE on the way TO the abortion clinic than SATAN.
 - Nobody is more PRO-LIFE on the way home FROM the abortion clinic than SATAN
 - From the beginning, infanticide has been a manifestation of evil and rebellion and godlessness.
 - Exodus 1:8-22 (Pharaoh); Matthew 2 (Herod)
 - The Serpent of Eden HATES babies—every birth of a baby reminds him of the Savior-baby born in Bethlehem and he RAGES against it! (Gen. 3:15)
 - Gen. 3:15—I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.
 - The enemy hates babies because he hates Jesus—in destroying the “least of these”, the enemy destroys a very picture of Kingdom trust, new life and seeks to wipe from his memory the reality that a child born to a woman was the means by which his own head was crushed!
 - **Stats:**
 - 343,000 abortions in the U.S. ALREADY in 2016
 - 42 million abortions worldwide each year
 - 115,000 abortions each day worldwide
 - We must not accept the ideologies of the wider culture that are powered by INVISIBILITY.
 - Roe v. Wade = 1973—NO 3-D SONOGRAMS.
 - Virtually ALL abortions in the U.S. happen AFTER 21 weeks—all organs are present and the baby can survive outside of the womb!
 - Fetuses are easy to disregard when they are invisible! This is the power of the ultrasound machine!
 - Behind all the questions of whether we should abort babies, torture prisoners, harass immigrants or force the elderly into euthanasia is the larger question, “who is Jesus of Nazareth?” If Jesus shares our humanity and the goal of the gospel is a new humanity in Christ, then LIFE MUST MATTER!
 - It is risky but WORTH IT to welcome the child with fetal alcohol syndrome into Harvest Kids.

- **What does the Bible Say about Unparented Children?**
 - Orphaned children provide opportunities to demonstrate gospel hospitality and pure/undefiled religion (James 1:27)
 - James 1:27—Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.
 - It is risky but WORTH IT to welcome the outcast orphans into our homes as beloved sons and daughters...these things disrupt our lives but they are worth it because the gospel of the Kingdom of God gives us a different perspective on who they are, who we are, and what our responsibility to them is as Kingdom citizens.
 - **Reality:**
 - Orphans in NC = 2,416.....Churches in NC = 17,625
 - If 1 Person or Family per SEVEN churches adopted domestically from NC...NO MORE ORPHANS.
 - Orphans in U.S. = 400,000.....Waiting to be Adopted = 100,000
 - There are 50,000 SBC churches...If 2 people/families from each adopted...NO MORE ORPHANS.
 - Orphans in the World = 153 million
 - 5,760 new orphans every day
 - 14.5 million age out every year with no families or homes of their own
 - James 1:27 and Matthew 25 (least of these) PRECLUDE US from Sitting Back and doing nothing!
 - We must be asking the Lord—“What would you have me do?”
 - Adopt?
 - Counsel at Pregnancy Crisis Centers?
 - Support Adoptive Parents Financially (adoption fund!)
 - Become a foster parent/a foster-to-adopt Parent.
- **What does the Bible Say about the Children Under our Roofs?**
 - Children are a blessing (Psalm 127:3-5)
 - Psalm 127:3-5—Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.
 - Children are a GIFT...not an entitlement.
 - This means children are not mistakes—God’s sovereignty means that the gift might not be timed how we would or look like we would have made it, etc but we CANNOT use the language of “mistake”.
 - This means children are not idols.
 - Whenever we find an idol, we find a cover-up for self worship—all of our idols are a means to us defining our meaning.
 - The dad who constantly rides his son at baseball practice is sad because what he shows it that his personal perception of success/significance is so bound up in his son that he cannot imagine the thought of failure.
 - Children are a heritage (Psalm 127:3-5)
 - What exactly does this mean?
 - Psalm 28:8-9—the Church, God’s children, are called a heritage to him.
 - Psalm 28:8-9—The Lord is the strength of his people; he is the saving refuge of his anointed. Oh, save your people and bless your heritage! Be their shepherd and carry them forever.

- It means that God, as our father, adopts us and then through us establishes a means of spreading his remembrance—his heritage.
 - The Church is the way that God will be known and remembered throughout all generations.
 - If someone asks you...”where did you come from/what is your heritage?”
 - You might say Ireland, Middle East, England....
- On a deeper level, if someone asks our children what their heritage is, we must be instilling into them a Kingdom and gospel heritage!
- **Children are a means of God’s mission (Genesis 1:28)**
 - Genesis 1:28—And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.
 - Children are a CRITICAL piece of God’s plan to fill the earth with worshippers.
 - Just as infant murder goes hand in hand with redemption...CHILDREN go hand in hand with mission!
 - Psalm 127—the arrows of war = shapeable and launch able for the sake of the gospel!
- **Children Demonstrate the Kingdom (Mark 10:13-16)**
 - Mark 10:13-16—And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.” And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.
- **Children are a valuable part of the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:13-16)**
 - Disciples rebuked—literally censured, punished, etc (they were an intrusion/distraction to the disciples)
 - Jesus welcomed—Jesus knew that children showed adults much in terms of who the kingdom was for!
- **Children teach adults about the Kingdom (v.15)**
 - Jesus literally says, “unless you become like THEM”
 - He doesn’t just say, “tolerate and teach them until they become adults so they can do big things.”
 - He says, “LEARN FROM THEM...BE LIKE THEM!”
 - New dynamic to the “neighbor” idea from last week—not only is ALL of Scripture informative about how we teach, lead and train our children but life among children is an opportunity to LEARN and be SHAPED by grace into Kingdom citizens!
 - Learn from: their trust, their willingness to appeal for needs, their dependence, their wild faith and belief.
- **Conclusion:**
 - This is why children matter to us at Harvest.
 - We aren’t just tolerating behavior or WAITING TILL THEY ARE OLDER. Rather, we are loving and stewarding them as gifts given to us by God for the sake of spreading his name and renown to the ends of the earth.
 - We are also realizing that God placed children at a critical place in the mission of God—we must celebrate children, adopt children, foster children, teach and train children and even LEARN from children!