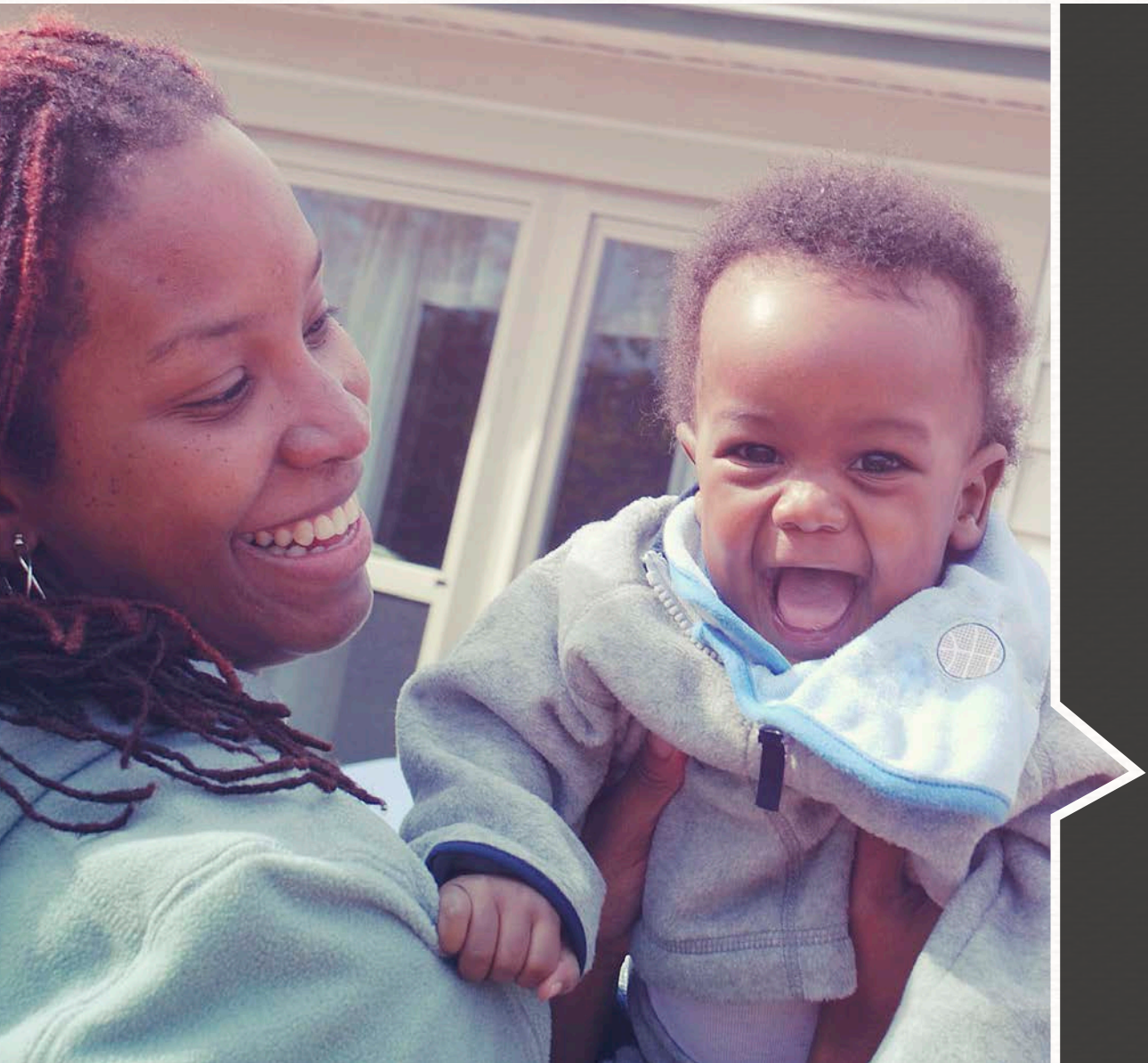


# SESSION 1

# IS EVERY LIFE SACRED?



*How can people tell what is valuable to you?*



*God values life and so should we.*



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

What is the value of a human life? For many in our American culture, a mother's womb has become a hazardous site. The plight of the aged is riddled with accounts of neglect and abuse.

More than 25 years ago, former Surgeon General, C. Everett Koop lamented the devaluation of human life, "When I graduated from medical school the idea was, 'How can I save this life?' but now for a great number of the medical students it is, 'Should I save this life?'" If we want to understand the true value of life, the best resource to consult is the book penned by the Author of life.

The God of creation, who created us in His image, provides us with several insights into His perspective about the incalculable worth of human life. One specific example of this perspective is found in Psalm 139. Addressed to the Choirmaster, this psalm of David celebrates God's intimate knowledge of us and His intricate fashioning of us as His unique handiwork. As the Author and Sustainer of human life, God values our existence. Because He values life, so should we.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## *Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 (HCSB)*

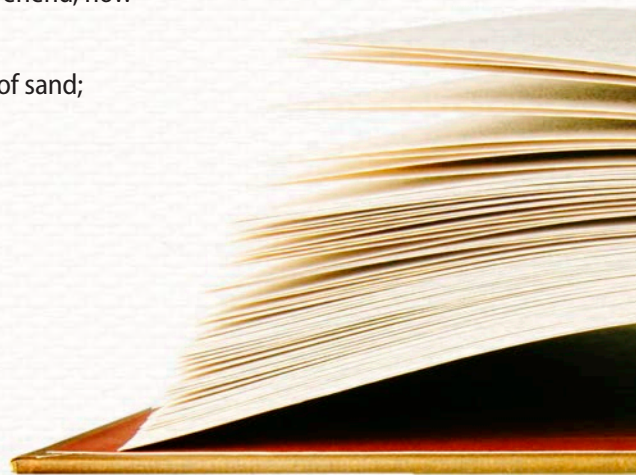
- 1 LORD, You have searched me and known me.
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I stand up; You understand my thoughts from far away.
- 3 You observe my travels and my rest; You are aware of all my ways.
- 4 Before a word is on my tongue, You know all about it, LORD.
- 5 You have encircled me; You have placed Your hand on me.
- 6 This extraordinary knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to reach it.
- 
- 13 For it was You who created my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 14 I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well.
- 15 My bones were not hidden from You when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the earth.
- 16 Your eyes saw me when I was formless; all my days were written in Your book and planned before a single one of them began.
- 17 God, how difficult Your thoughts are for me to comprehend; how vast their sum is!
- 18 If I counted them, they would outnumber the grains of sand; when I wake up, I am still with You.

## Key Words

**known** (v. 1)—Unique kind of intimate knowledge of a person resulting from a close, personal relationship; how the Lord knows us.

**encircled** (v. 5)—Being enfolded back and front by the Lord, who has the absolute power to control and protect completely.

**knit me** (v. 13)—Depicts a skilled artisan, carefully weaving a tapestry with exact precision. It pictures God's intimate involvement in creating each of us.





## ***Psalm 139:1-6***

David marveled at the Lord's comprehensive knowledge and awareness of him. The God who created us and who has a plan for us is also the God who is with us wherever we might be. God is always present with His people. God is mindful of our daily schedules, activities, and thoughts. He goes before us and behind us.

The Lord's presence is inescapable. We never go anywhere, engage in any activity, or entertain any thought outside of the knowledge and presence of God. God is neither unconcerned with humanity, nor distant.

Some people may picture God as a supreme being who takes no active interest in His creation. To them, God may seem detached and distant, unwilling to empathize with the experiences and emotions of His creatures.

Yet, the Bible presents God as One who actively intervenes in the lives of people. For example, consider Moses' first encounter with God described in Exodus 3. When the Lord called him to be the deliverer of His people, Moses was overwhelmed. God revealed His presence to Moses at the burning bush, through the Red Sea, and on the top of Mount Sinai, demonstrating that He was always with His people.

In the nativity story, we see the focus on God's presence taken to an entirely new level. The Son born to a virgin is described as Immanuel, a name meaning "God with us." Jesus was the Word made flesh who came to earth to save His people. Later, when Jesus who charged His disciples to go into the entire world with the good news of the gospel, He included this promise: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20). God will never leave us nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

***From these verses,  
how can you know  
that God values you?***

### **QUESTION #1**

## EXPRESSING VALUE

*Choose one*

*Ways I can show love to these people:*

- Unborn children
- Children and students
- Elderly adults
- People with physical challenges
- People with mental challenges





## Psalm 139:13-16

The fact that God has developed a detailed plan for every aspect of our existence is further proof of our worth to Him. David recognized that he had been fearfully and wonderfully made:

- ▶ God Himself is the source and designer of our existence.
- ▶ He formed our inward parts and knit us in the womb.

**Since life begins at conception, how does this impact our attitudes toward the hardest questions about abortion?**

### QUESTION #2

**What should characterize our treatment of others (the sick, poor, disabled, elderly) in light of the fact that we are all fearfully and wonderfully made?**

### QUESTION #3

If we take these verses seriously, we are left with no other option than the reality that human life begins at conception. We do not need a medical degree to understand that a life in embryonic form is a life and not a meaningless blob. These verses reveal the stunning contrast between God's view of human life and the view that fueled the landmark decision, *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion in 1973. According to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 50 million abortions have been performed in the United States since 1973.\*

"But what about those children born with disabilities or deformities?" These realities are a part of humanity's fallen state. We live in a world marred by sin in which Satan, the prince of darkness, wields his wicked influence. All of creation has been affected by sin. Yet this truth in no way justifies the extermination of those deemed by a society to be unfit or unproductive. History is replete with the stories of those who bless others and make significant contributions even in the midst of their disabilities.

The human body, with all of its members and functions, is an astoundingly complex and amazingly orchestrated creation.

The Lord created us, and orchestrated and ordered all the days of our lives. Given these truths, it is no wonder that David erupted in praise and wonder, "Your works are wonderful" (v. 14).

\* Based on the CDC's Annual Abortion Surveillance Reports ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))

"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these!"

— GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER

### **Psalm 139:17-18**

We should live in light of the fact that God values us. He has assigned worth to those made in His image. Jesus confirmed the truth that God values human life: "Aren't five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God's sight. Indeed, the hairs of your head are all counted. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows!" (Luke 12:6-7).

Beyond that, God also knows us completely. Our past, present, and future actions and thoughts are seen by an all-powerful and all-knowing God. This knowledge blew David's mind. He couldn't wrap his finite mind around the reality that the Lord, so lofty and transcendent, has taken such an intense and intimate interest in him.

God's love and care for us is particularly amazing, given that He knows everything about us—the good, the bad, and the ugly. God knew the worst about David and He knows the worst about us. Yet, because of His love and grace, He values us and sets His love upon us anyway.

The ultimate demonstration of God's valuing of us is the cross of Jesus Christ. "But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

The sacredness of human life is grounded in the facts that God created us in His image, knows every detail of our existence, and has given His Son in order to save us from our sins.

***Which attribute of God mentioned in these verses have you recently seen firsthand?***

#### **QUESTION #4**



## LIVE IT OUT

Psalms 139 shows that God values human life. So should we.

- ▶ **Write a letter that values life.** Perhaps you'll enclose money to help save babies and enhance lives. Your local school might need a piece of playground equipment that accommodates a child who happens to be in a wheelchair.
- ▶ **Show grace.** Many people suffer silently with guilt over involvement with a past abortion. If you know someone like this, extend God's love and grace to him or her.
- ▶ **Form a friendship with someone who's been labeled.** Think about the labels "homeless," "terminally ill," "mentally handicapped," and so on. Getting to know someone will change your attitude about that person.



God calls us to value, cherish, and guard human life. Show the sanctity of each life.

## The Lost Voices



**I can't do this! I can't be in a Bible study with all these godly women. I don't fit in here, *Sandy thought, wiping mascara-stained tears from her face.* I've had four abortions. How can God forgive that when I can't forgive myself? These women would be appalled if they knew my secret.**

***Can you picture the church, God's family of faith, as the scariest place in the world to share your deepest secret and***

***greatest pain? Perhaps you can.***



To continue reading "The Lost Voices" from *HomeLife* magazine, visit [BibleStudiesforLife.com/articles](http://BibleStudiesforLife.com/articles).



# My group's prayer requests

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## My thoughts