

Voice of Care Bible Study *(also available as a video)*

A. The Basis for Valuing Human Life

Psalm 139:13-16 *Read or have a participant read entire selection*

¹³ For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ 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.

Key Points:

1. *We are fearfully and wonderfully made*

None of us—none of us—are a happenstance, or an accident. God, the God of Creation, Father Son and Holy Spirit formed us, “knitted [us] together” inside the womb. This language suggests intentionality, which also suggests: You have been made by God to do unique things that *only you* can do: and, the individuals we serve are equally outfitted by God for a special ministry and place in this world. Made by God, they are treated as God’s handiwork. We are, “fearfully and wonderfully made”—commanding respect (for the fearfully), and awe (for the wonderfully). We have souls. God’s spirit in us informs our souls (our thinking processes) that this is true. Harold Hill once said that the unsaved think that, rather than made by God, we are a product of a “From Goo to You by way of the Zoo” evolutionary processes.

2. *God knows us from the start of conception*

What a wonderful thought—fearfully and wonderfully made also means God has a relationship with His creations. What a joy to us to see our pottery come out of the kiln finished, or the dyed Easter egg, or the decorated cookie. We want that item; we claim that item. And if we give it away or use it for a special purpose, that is special to us also—same with God, and YOU!

3. *Every day of our lives was written before we were formed.*

Billy Graham authored a tract titled, God’s Spiritual Laws. The first law was that, “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life.” We believe this about those we serve and about ourselves. When we take a pro-life stance and vow to save the unborn child, we are promising to stand by the families who chose not to abort a less-than-perfectly-developed child, and to see the value and potential in each of God’s created people.

B. Who sinned?

John 9:1-5 *Read or have a participant read entire selection*

¹ As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. ² And his disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ Jesus answered, “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. ⁴ We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

Key points:

1. *Clearly no one sinned to cause a birth defect.*

But, *everything* on earth is affected by *the Fall*. Jesus does not say that no sin was involved. All are born into sin under the Fall of Man, but, sin is not causative (in a “this leads to THIS” sense).

2. *God can use a situation of a birth defect (as He can any and all situations, struggles or problems) to bring glory to Himself.*

3. *Jesus is the Light in all dark situations!*

While we do not say that a person with a disability has sinned to *cause* his or her situation, we sometimes treat people like they need to be separate from the rest of the congregation or community. If we all have sinned and need a Savior, then we must include all people equally.

C. How do people come to faith?

Romans 10:14-17 *Read or have a participant read entire selection*

¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” ¹⁷ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ

Key Points:

1. *Faith comes from hearing the Word of God. It is the power of God’s Word.*

In confirmation class we learned that God’s Spirit works with our Spirit through the hearing of the word to create Faith in the heart. That is why we baptize infants who cannot communicate their understanding.

2. *Salvation is not based on our ability to articulate doctrine nor the amount of faith.*

3. *There is no distinction as to who should hear or be taught, whether young, old, intelligent, non-verbal, developmentally disabled, or those whose disability came later through accident or infirmity.*

Ephesians 2:8-9 *Read or have a participant read entire selection*

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Key points:

1. *Salvation and Faith is not of our own doing*

2. *It is a gift of God—Remember Grace, **G-R-A-C-E** is God's Riches At Christ's Expense*

3. *No boasting—on our part to have “gotten saved.”*

It was all God's action received by our faith, which God's Spirit worked in our hearts. Say with me John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.” So, someone who cannot “do” – such things as verbalize, write, communicate can still have the gift of faith. We should not boast that we can nor feel superior.

D. We are God's Masterpiece

Ephesians 2:10

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Key Point:

Ephesians 2:10—So often when Ephesians 2:8-9 is cited, verse 10 is left out, but knowing it and stressing it, is essential to the work you are doing and the people you are serving and to whom you are ministering.

Everyone was created by Christ and designed to perform good works that GOD prepared for His glory. Thus, God expects all Christians, including those with developmental disabilities to have a use and place in the Body of Christ.

Note: referenced scriptures are from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version