

Genesis 1:26-28; Acts 17:22-31; John 15:12-17 ESV

Created, Redeemed, Called

Sunday, January 17 at 8:00 & 10:45 + Monday, January 18 at 7 PM
Sanctity of Human Life Sunday – 2016

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

- ⇒ **Created** by God the *Father* – Life!
- ⇒ **Redeemed** by God the *Son* – Forgiveness!
- ⇒ **Called** by God the *Holy Spirit* – Baptism!



OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis 1:26-28 ESV – Created!

God decided what to do:

²⁶ Then God [*the Triune God*] said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

God did it:

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

God blessed and instructed the people:

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.”

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Commentary: Now that God has freely given us ✦physical life, ✦eternal life, and ✦all we need, *we are filled with gratitude!* Now we live to show love *for Him* and *for others!*



HYMN OF THE DAY – Part 1: “Life is a Gift From God”

EPISTLE: Acts 17:22-31 ESV – Redeemed!

Paul began Where They Were:

²² So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I

passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.

The True God is an Awesome God:

²⁴ The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.

The True God Longs for a Relationship with Us:

²⁶ And he made from one man [*from Adam and Eve*] every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.'

- He made us – *so let us think about Him!*
- He is in control – *so let us marvel at Him!*
- ♣In nature, ♣in His Word, and ♣in His Son He has left us a trail by which He leads us to Him – *so let us not ignore Him!*
- "In him we live and move and have our being" – *so let us draw near to Him!*

It's Time to Ignoring the True God:

²⁹ Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. ³⁰ The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

Commentary: We have all done things out of ignorance – *because of a lack of knowledge.* But now, *since a day has been fixed when the risen Jesus will return to judge every person,* let us repent! In other words, let us stop being confident of heaven because:

- We are good people,

- We go to church,
- We give 10% of all we receive,
- We serve according to our abilities,
- We are good neighbors,
- We support Christian ministries,
- We know people who are Christians,
- We read Portals or Meditations,
- We are confirmed Lutherans,
- We are US citizens, or
- We donate to the needy.

God is calling us to repent, *to turn away from all such things for our salvation*; **therefore**, let us ✦be sorry for our sins and ✦trust only in Jesus for our entrance into heaven!

HYMN OF THE DAY – Part 2: “Life is a Gift From God”

↑ GOSPEL: John 15:12-17 ESV – Called!

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fifteenth chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

God’s Love for Us:

¹² “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. [How much did Jesus love us?]” ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.

Our Close Relationship with Jesus:

¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.

We have also been Chosen or Called:

¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide [remain, continue], so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.** ↓

Commentary: God is always *the first* to love us – by ✦creating us, ✦providing for us, ✦sending His Son for us, ✦calling us to be His own

through baptism, and ♦working through His Word to grow us up in Jesus. Then, *in response*, God is calling us to:

- Love Him – *by doing whatever He commands*, and
- Love others – *by taking action according to their needs*.

We have God’s Word, *which tells us of His love for us and how we show love for Him*.

We live in a world of needy people, *who need us to love them in Jesus’ name by saying that*:

- God makes every human life!
- Life begins at conception!
- Every life needs Jesus!
- Jesus is received through baptism!
- Everyone needs spiritual nourishment!

We are also called to action by:

- Voting for prolife candidates; *register and do your homework*.
- Supporting a local pregnancy center, *like the Cleveland Pregnancy Center*.
- Opposing Planned Parenthood; here is one reason why: In 2014 they performed 327,653 abortions while making only 1,880 adoption referrals. *Their primary business is killing babies*
(Brochure: Planned Parenthood; It’s not what you think, 7-1-2015, page 2).

Sermon Conclusion:

♦God has created every person; ♦God has redeemed every person through Jesus; and ♦God is calling every person *through Baptism and through His Word* to **be** and **continue in** a wonderful, eternal relationship with Him.

Let us rejoice that we have been created, redeemed, and called! Then let us go forth to love God and others! **Amen!**

HYMN OF THE DAY – Part 3: “Life is a Gift From God”

Disciple Training

Remember: God is the Giver of every life!

Practice: Support life, especially those who are more defenseless – *the preborn, young children, disabled, and elderly!*

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