

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 6) 05 Jan 2014..... John 15:26 – 16:33..... Depend on the Spirit
- 7) 12 Jan.....John 17.....Honor Jesus
- 8) 19 Jan.....Psalms 139..... Value Every Life**
- 9) 26 Jan.....John 18..... Our Messiah - Abused
- 10) 02 Feb..... John 19:1-16..... Our King - Condemned
- 11) 09 Feb..... John 19:17-42..... Our Savior - Crucified
- 12) 16 Feb..... John 20..... Live in Resurrection Power
- 13) 23 Feb.....John 21.....Follow with Renewed Purpose

INTRODUCTION

- **The Value of Life – What is at Stake?** 1) The soul of the child;
 2) The future life of the child – who would have an opportunity to know the Lord and lead a fruitful life with rewards in Heaven;
 3) Our own soul – it is either enriched or impoverished depending on our support for the unborn, the weak, the perishing, for we are to deliver those being taken away to slaughter.. **Proverbs 24:11-12**

Passage	Comments
Psalms 139:13-16	<p>God's Sovereignty Over Every Birth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This passage highlights the wonders of embryonic development – and God's involvement • We are not human tissue to be discarded like garbage, but purposefully made to fulfill a specific plan by God (<i>"My days were ordained for me before there was even one"</i>) • When we disrupt God's intent for someone's life (including our own) through murder (suicide) or sin, we do not thwart God's sovereign will, but we do shortchange ourselves, and we impact others for generations
Do ALL Babies and the Mentally Handi-capped go to Heaven?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture is rather silent on the subject. No explicit teaching on it. • One of the best affirmative responses comes from Albert Mohler, a staunch Calvinist, and President and Professor of Christian Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY, http://www.albertmohler.com/2009/07/16/the-salvation-of-the-little-ones-do-infants-who-die-go-to-heaven/ • Issues. Naturally, God being gracious and merciful, we think the prospect for Him to doom innocent infants and mentally handicapped to Hell is inconceivable. However, there are issues to consider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conceivably, since a sovereign God knows which babies would be miscarried, aborted, mentally handicapped, or die in infancy/childhood before the so-called age of accountability He could easily choose to instill a 'chosen' or 'elect' soul into those infants, and thereby circumvent the need for reconciliation since they would not need to atone for any sins (Mohler's position). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which means they died without sinning. Though, no one is perfect, God's grace through Christ presumably saves them • ISSUE: God becomes a respecter of persons based on age or mental capacity. 2. If ALL babies do go to Heaven, then, conceivably, the best form of evangelism is abortion and infanticide. ISSUE: Satan would be fighting for pro-life 3. If ALL babies do go to Heaven then at what point is the age of accountability when babies flip from being Heaven-bound to Hell-bound? ISSUE: If it is not 20 years of age as noted in Numbers 14:28-31, then it is very subjective and indiscernible • Problem with Calvinism on this Issue: John Calvin says God was our enemy until we were reconciled to Him by Christ [2.16.2]. A conclusion can be drawn from this (and other similar statements by Calvin) that all babies and mentally handicapped individuals who do not have the ability to participate in the reconciliation process are unable to attain Heaven. This is why true Calvinists (Presbyterians) believe in the salvation aspect of infant baptism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calvin agrees with Plato that children of loyalty (i.e., the elect) are distinguished at birth with some special qualities [2.3.4]. • ISSUE. Calvin has no Scriptural basis for this belief. If it was possible to test babies at birth for their distinguished special qualities that mark them as the elect, then some would want to have mercy on the others and abort/slay them before they add sin upon sin and be judged even harsher at the end of their lives • Scripture Justification. There are passages of Scripture that are often used to show that the infant-minded are Heaven bound: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 2Samuel 12:14-23. King David's son, from his immoral relationship with Bathsheba, died and David commented that "I will go to him, but he will not return to me." Some use this passage to show that all babies go to Heaven.

Passage	Comments
Do ALL Babies and the Mentally Handi-capped go to Heaven? (continued)	<p>ISSUE. However, that is a misapplication. First, if David's son did go to Heaven, and David knew it to be so, it could have been because David was also a prophet, and God could have revealed that information to him. So this passage could not be applied to all babies. In all likelihood, David was referring that he would join his son in the grave as he too would die one day.</p> <p>b) 1Kings 14:13. King Jeroboam's son died young because God saw something good in him. Again, some take this to universally show that all young children go to heaven if they were to die in their innocence. ISSUE. That interpretation applies bad hermeneutics since the passage is only addressing one particular child; and his eternal destiny is not directly indicated as being Heaven bound; only that God's grace would keep him from being eaten by dogs as the rest of his family would be.</p> <p>c) Ezekiel 16:21. "You have slain my children." This was God's charge against Israel for sacrificing "His" children to false idols. Again, some use this to universally show that all babies go to Heaven, but again, that is bad hermeneutics for this passage. ISSUE. At best we can only assume those children sacrificed were Heaven-bound, but not necessarily so. God also considered all Israel as His people, His children, His nation; but we know "they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel" (Rom 9:6). IOW, not all Israelites are Heaven-bound, though all Israelites are considered God's people, God's children.</p> <p>d) Mat 19:14. Jesus said, "Permit little children to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." ISSUE. Childlikeness is what gets someone into Heaven; and not just being a child. Isaiah 9:17 reflects children who went to Hell – "Nor does [God] have pity on their orphans or their widows; for every one of them is godless and an evildoer"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last Thoughts. Scripture is very silent on this subject of whether or not some, ALL, or no infants and the infant-minded automatically go to Heaven upon their death. Arguments abound pro and con, but they all have weaknesses. The Catholics, not finding a reasonable solution in the Bible, contrived in the 13th century the concept of LIMBO for unbaptized infants & the mentally handicapped. In recent years the Catholic church has formally and officially backed away from that belief and concluded that all children who die do so in the expectation of "the universal salvation of God" and the "mediation of Christ", whether baptized or not. In effect, they believe that all children who die go to Heaven. Recall that Calvin's answer to this predicament, like the Catholics and Presbyterians, was to have all infants baptized to assure their entrance into Heaven. • CONCLUSION. We have to admit that "secret things belong onto God" (Deuteronomy 29:29). We can only go as far as the Bible goes, and assume the best – that God will do what is righteous and just. When we get to Heaven ourselves, we will more fully understand, and we will glorify God whether some, none, or ALL infant-minded souls are covered under the blood of Christ.

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- What are we doing to protect and nurture the unborn?
- We need to look at the unborn as having the unalienable right to live, to grow, and to make a choice for or against God

NEXT WEEK: John 18. "What is Truth?"

