

Session 2

January 20, 2019

WHEN LIFE IS EXPENDABLE

Exodus 1:16-17; 1:22-2:9

There is only one sin, and that sin is pride. From Lucifer in heaven, to Adam and Eve in the garden, to Rich Elligson in Graceville; deep down, we all want to be God! And nowhere is man's sinful, prideful nature more evident than in the moral arena of deciding who gets to live...and who deserves to die. If God really is our sovereign Creator, and God really did create man in His own image, then human life is not only a precious gift, but it is under divine authority. *Focus on the Family* writer Carrie Gordon Earll said it nicely:

Contrary to cultural messages, our value isn't determined by our ethnicity, race or gender; nor by our age, ability or location. It's our divine membership in the human family that sets each of us apart as sacred. Men, women and children (including preborn children in the womb) should be respected, regardless of their mental capacity, physical ability, or social position.

Two distinct groups emerge in this week's lesson.

The corruption of the powerful (1:16-22). Today's version of human selectivity hasn't changed much from centuries past. Those who decide who gets to live and who needs to die are cultural *elitists*; those who see themselves as experts, particularly intelligent, or extremely influential. The same was true in the days of Moses. The brutality of Egypt's king was a result of his own thirst for power. Nineteenth-century historian John Dalberg-Acton once wrote, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men." Pharaoh exemplified this perfectly. Fearful of losing his own grip on power and wanting to remind the foreigners who was in control, Pharaoh first ordered that the Jews living in Egypt be enslaved (1:8ff). When that didn't work, he ordered the Egyptian midwives to murder male children born to the Jews (v. 16). When even that didn't work, he ordered the general public to do the killing (v. 22). The wholesale killing of male babies would be repeated at the time of Christ's birth by wicked King Herod (see Matt. 2:16ff). In Moses' case, the corrupt king of Egypt was an *elitist*. He (1) saw himself as smarter than everyone else, (2) had the arrogance to assert that his immoral actions were for the good of the society, and (3) had the power to pull it off. The lesson for today? Lord Acton's proverb still applies: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." Beware of those powerful elitists who see themselves as intellectually and morally superior to everyone else, who assume their warped views are best for everyone, and who try to implement them "for the good of society."

The compassion of the merciful (2:1-9). Thankfully, not everyone falls for the lies of the devil; the one who came to steal, kill and destroy. Followers of Christ, rather, embrace life and revel in its abundance (see John 10:10). The story of Moses is one of the providence of God and the preservation of life. The baby born to Amram and Jochebed was both precious and beautiful. He was hidden for three months at home, then hidden among the reeds of the river. He was guarded by his older sister, adopted by his enemy's daughter, and nursed again by his mother Jochebed. Ironically, this time she was even paid to do so! In every part of the story, God's providence is carried out by compassionate people who were dedicated to preserving life, rather than

destroying it. The lesson for today? The Lord Jesus called Himself “the life.” He came to “give life.” If life is so precious to Christ, then we ought to embrace it, enjoy it, celebrate it, and preserve it. In every case, and in every way, followers of Christ must “choose life!” (Deut. 30:19).