



I Came That They May Have Life

A BIBLE STUDY

GOD REVEALS HIMSELF in the sacred Scriptures as the Living God (DEUT. 5:26), the God of life, the implacable foe of death and the devil (HEB. 2:14). God came into the flesh, born of the holy Virgin, specifically to battle and defeat death, to reveal it as the enemy that it is: “The last enemy to be destroyed is death” (1 COR. 15:26).

The devil, the liar, always tries to disguise his intentions, appearing even as “an angel of light” (2 COR. 11:14). Christ, however, unmasks him, his intention and the purpose of those evil spirits aligned with him: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (JOHN 10:10). Where we find the stealing away of a human life, the killing of one made in the sacred image of God and the destruction of a human being, we know whose fingerprints are all over it. True, Satan tries to disguise his work. He’d rather speak of about “choice” and “dying with dignity,” but it amounts to the same thing in the end: a death that unnaturally cuts short the life God, the Author of life (ACTS 3:15), bestowed.

Nothing so fortifies a Christian against the deceptions of the lying spirits than the clear and joyous light of the Word of God, which truly is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path (PS. 119:105). We need to regain and strengthen ourselves in the truth of God’s Word against the deceptions of the devil. This Bible study is designed to let the Bible’s story, which is the truth, dwell within us, shaping our thoughts about the challenges that confront us in contemporary society concerning life issues. Read aloud the following passages from the Word and discuss the questions that follow.

“I believe that God has made me” (SMALL CATECHISM, EXPLANATION TO THE APOSTLES’ CREED).

“**THE THIEF COMES ONLY TO STEAL AND KILL AND DESTROY. I CAME THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT ABUNDANTLY.**”

JOHN 10:10

Read the following passages and discuss:

PS. 95:6–7 | PS. 100:3 | PROV. 14:31 | IS. 29:16

1. How is God described?
2. What are the implications of such a description for your own life?
3. What are the implications for the lives of your neighbors?

“...that He has given me my body and soul...”

Read the following passages and discuss:

PS. 139:13–16 | LUKE 1:13–15 | LUKE 1:39–45

1. Where and when does the Bible teach that a human life actually begins?
2. What does Gabriel say will be remarkable about John? Implications?
3. What are the implications of John confessing Christ even before birth?

“...and still takes care of them...”

Read the following passages and discuss:

EX. 20:13 | EX. 21:22–25 | ROM. 13:3–4 | DEUT. 19:4–13

1. Why do modern versions of the Bible usually render “murder” rather than “kill”?
2. What’s the difference between the two?
3. Does the government possess the right to execute according to the Scriptures?
4. What important additional distinction does Deuteronomy 19 teach?

“...defends me against all evil...”

Read the following and discuss:

LUKE 10:25–37 | PROV. 24:11–12

1. How did the robbers sin against God’s will for us in the Fifth Commandment?

2. How did the priest and Levite sin against God’s will for us in the Fifth Commandment?
3. Which danger do we face most prominently in our churches?
4. How can we speak up and be advocates for the unborn, the sick and the aged whose lives are threatened?
5. How was Christ Himself such an advocate for us?
6. How does the Church provide a refuge, an inn, for all who are damaged by the ravages of sin?

Conclusion

The God of life, who came into our flesh to defeat death, to bring His loving embrace to every sinner through the forgiveness won by His shed blood, summons the members of His body to share in His own way of thinking. This is what St. Paul calls “the mind of Christ” (1 COR. 2:16). St. Paul exhorts Christians not to be “conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (ROM. 12:2). And the Word of God reveals that the good and acceptable and perfect will of God always embraces life as His creation, His gift, which He sustains from the moment of our conception through natural death. He created us that we might have earthly life and even more: a share in His own divine life. Although we had fallen from it, He came among us, suffered and died, and then rose from death to bestow on us a life that has no end, a life that death cannot finally destroy or defeat. As we await His joyous return, we affirm the value that Christ’s incarnation has given to every human life.