

Abortion and Fatherlessness – *Malachi 4:5-6*

Introduction – Our church speaks out often, as all Christians should, on the sin of abortion, which is the murder of an unborn child. We support many strategies to slow down, stay, and abolish any possibility of legal abortions, for all abortions are a sin against the unborn child and such child sacrifices are an abomination before God. We also proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed for just such sins and sinners, like us, who call out to Him in faith. Forgiveness and healing are here for anyone who calls on the name of the Lord.

What I hope to show now is that abortion is not the problem and we must not address it as the problem to be solved. Abortion is a symptom of our cultural problem. The problem, and its cultural symptoms are legion, is fatherlessness. Our culture now treats fatherhood in the same way we tend to treat our appendix: an apparently unnecessary and useless add-on. And the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has come for just such a problem as well.

The Great and Dreadful Day of the Lord (Malachi 4) – The prophet declared a day when the wicked would be consumed like stubble in a fire (v1), but that same burning Sun would arise with healing in His wings for those who fear His name (v2). The result would be that the godly would tread down the wicked (v3). Those who fear the Lord then are charged to remember the law of Moses (v4) and promised that Elijah would come before that great and dreadful day of the LORD (v5). This would be the basis of a horizontal repentance of fathers and children (v6).

The Great and Dreadful Day of Jesus (Matt 11:11-15) – We are not to push this prophecy out into our future. On the authority of Jesus we are taught that Malachi 4 is speaking of His ministry, and Elijah is identified by Jesus as the ministry of John the Baptist who came preaching a message of repentance (Matt 3:1-2). The ministry of Jesus Christ was a violent overthrow of the principalities and powers, of Satan himself, through the violent death and resurrection (the violent overthrow of death) of the Lord Jesus. One aspect of John's message of repentance (and the ministry of Jesus) was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. And this is not simply to be understood individualistically. This addresses the first abdication of our first father and covenant head.

What is a Father For? (Gen 2:15) – Adam was placed in the Garden by God to *"tend and keep"* it. And it was in that garden that Eve was brought to Adam, a garden within a garden, to tend and keep. The word to *"tend"* means to till, work, serve. The word to *"keep"* means to watch, keep, protect, preserve. Therefore, Adam was told to provide for and protect his wife. Instead, the serpent provided for the wife and Adam allowed it, refusing to protect her. He had been given the prohibition directly by God before she was created (Gen 2:17ff) and failed to take responsibility for his family.

Abdicating Fathers and the Curse of Fatherlessness – Every time an abortion occurs there is a father who has abdicated his God-given role and responsibility. His seed is only to be given in the protection of a union sealed with a lawful covenantal oath, vows of faithfulness and promise to tend and keep that which has been given to him and that which may come forth from what was given to him. And with fornication, men in principle abdicate fatherhood before they are fathers, and so have already in principle turned their hearts from their children. They hate children because they despise the normal and biblical fruit to their lustful actions. And as Malachi warned, *"lest I come and strike the land with a curse."* This curse spreads everywhere.

The State Patriarchy - Since we don't want fathers, our culture has given most of the responsibility and authority of fathers to our patriarchal state (that is where we actually find toxic masculinity today). From cradle to grave, the State is now responsible to tend and keep us. Men have abdicated (and are encouraged to abdicate) and so they have no legal right over their unborn children – and men are ok with it. Look at that poor soul holding the sign saying, "Women's Right to Choose" and see fatherlessness.

No-Fault Divorce Laws – There certainly have been times in history where unbiblical laws made it easier for men to prove grounds for divorce than women could. That was wrong and unfair. So, we decided to make it worse. No-fault divorce in principle destroyed the concept of marriage and the life-long commitment necessary for raising children. And men are ok with it.

The Pornography Industry – Porn feeds off of fatherlessness and in turn engenders more fatherlessness. Our hatred of abortion is thin if at the same time we partake of porn. Those women are forced to avoid pregnancy through abortifacient birth controls and abortions. Fathers are to protect their daughters from being given to the sex trade that includes pornography and prostitution, but the entertainment media (a fatherless bunch) promotes immodesty and fornication as tools for empowering women. Fathers are to teach their sons self-control and how to say no to their lusts (see Proverbs), but the State Patriarchy says its all legal and good and here are some free condoms and pills. And men are ok with it.

All our Sexual Confusions – *"Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves..."* (Rom 1:24ff) - Need I say more?

Gospel Bearing Fathers – Returning to our text, when God gives the gift of the Sun of Righteousness, healing comes. And that is just what the Father did when He gave His only begotten Son. What does the gospel give guilt-ridden but self-absorbed men and women who are fatherless? It gives them a Father. We are able to come to the Father in the power of the Spirit by the Way of the Son. Repenting fathers whose hearts are rightly turned towards their children will find their children imitating this as well, laying down bitterness and finding themselves drawn to their fathers (Col 3:12-14). To the children, let me say, hear the words in Proverbs, *“My son, give me your heart; and let your eyes observe my ways”* (Prov 23:26). Abortion is horrible and wicked. What can you do? Obey your parents in the Lord. Honor your father and mother...

Abortion is not the problem. Abortion is a symptom. The problem is fatherlessness. The solution is the gospel of the Sun of Righteousness. Only God can turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. Come Lord Jesus!

Dave Hatcher – January 19, 2020

Notes for Little Saints

The gospel is so powerful that it can change hearts. When God grants us faith in Jesus, our relationship with God and our relationships with one another are transformed.

At the end of the Old Testament, God said that the ministry of John the Baptist, pointing us to repentance and faith in Jesus, would change the hearts of fathers and children.

“...and he will turn the hearts of the _____ to their _____,

And the hearts of the _____ to their _____.” (Malachi 4:6)

If your father and mother love the Lord, you have so much to be thankful for. They are believing God for many good things for you in your life and they are raising you to fear Him with them.

What should you do in return?

Write out Ephesians 6:1-3 –

Through our faithful families and churches, God intends to change this world. You have the privilege of being a part of that – even now as we come to worship Him.