



Celebrating Life as the Handiwork of God

By Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

“I’m in pretty good shape for the shape I’m in!” That’s a positive view of life! Even more positive — “I’m in pretty good shape because God shaped me!” Knowing that the value of human life comes from God’s handiwork and does not depend upon our capabilities or condition enables us to value our lives and the lives of others. We celebrate and share the message that human life is created, redeemed, and held by God’s hands.

Read **Psalm 8**. Display an old handcrafted quilt or other item that’s a bit worn. Discuss how the value comes not from its looks but because it is someone’s handiwork.

If the handmade item displayed were tattered or torn, would that decrease its value? How does this apply to human life? See **Isaiah 45:9–11**. _____

Prayer

Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless our study of Your Word and guide our understanding of the truth that You give value to each human life. In Your Name. Amen.

Celebrate the value God’s creating hands give to life and sing!

Lord of Life* [Sung to “Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us”]

Lord of life, whose hand has made us,
formed us each with tender care.
You had crowned men with Your image,
not intending such despair.
Yet through sin the glory faded,
death and doom came in its place.
But in spite of our condition,
we’ve been rescued by Your grace!

Redeemed by God’s Hand

Ever lose something? Is there sometimes a price to get it back (e.g., replacing a driver’s license)? _____

Redeem means to buy back with a price. What is the price for lost sinners (**Romans 6:23a; Revelation 21:8**)? _____

You were bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20 ESV). You know the price. Fill in the blanks: “[N]ot with _____

or _____
but with His holy, precious _____
and innocent _____
and _____.”

Created by God’s Hands The First Human Lives

Genesis 1:26–27 What did God do that gave value to the first human beings? _____

Genesis 2:7, 22 What picture does God give in the verbs *formed* and *made* (literally, *built*)? _____

Genesis 9:6 Discuss how this original high position gives human life value even after the fall into sin.

Subsequent Human Lives

Genesis 1:28; 2:24 How will God continue His procreative work? _____

Job 10:8; Psalm 139:13–14; 119:73

What picture does this give about His involvement? _____

If human beings came with tags like clothing, they would read, “Handmade by God!” Discuss the implications for the following:

- Human life in the womb
- Grandma in the care center
- The frozen embryo in the fertility clinic.

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Were God's hands involved in this price? (**John 19:18; 20:20**)
For whom did Jesus pay this price? Lutherans? Christians?
_____ (**John 3:16; Hebrews 7:27**)

Every life is a life for whom Jesus died and rose again! The unborn child is not a mistake or unwanted but someone "bought with a price." Immobile grandpa is not a burden or unproductive but someone "bought with a price."

Being redeemed by the loving hands of God is a particularly powerful message for those who have made wrong choices about life. For example, women who have had an abortion — many of whom are Christian — often feel crushed by guilt and shame.

Read the following passages out loud. Silently pause after each. Allow God's Spirit to speak to all and especially to any burdened with the "secret" sin of abortion (**1 John 1:8–9; Romans 8:1; Isaiah 1:18**).

Stand and recite together:

Fellow sisters in Christ who have sinned against life, we stand together beneath the cross as sinners in thought, word, and deed. But in Christ, God forgives *all sin*. We value each other and everyone as individuals who have been "bought with a price." We pledge to each other our love and acceptance and prayers.

Celebrate the value God's redeeming hands give to life and sing!

God so loved the world, He gave us
Jesus Christ to bear our sin.
On the cross His life He offered,
that we might be His again.
And the Holy Spirit calls us
by the Gospel's joyful ring.
Making us His own dear children
us, eternal life to bring.

Held by God's Hand

After a fall on an icy walk, Katie said to her dad, "Maybe I should hold your hand." The feeble grip on a couple of Dad's fingers was not enough. The ice won again. This time Dad spoke, "Maybe I should hold *your* hand." Katie's little hand was surrounded! Oh, she still slipped, but she never fell.

Read **Isaiah 42:6a**. Describing His relationship to His Servant Messiah, God also gives a picture of His relationship to us. When are we "called in righteousness"? (**Romans 6:3–4**) _____

What comfort do we receive from the fact that God holds our hand and not the other way around? (**John 10:27–30**) _____

Discuss how this comfort might apply to a family in your congregation dealing with a crisis pregnancy, infertility, a frightening diagnosis, placing a parent in a care center, the suicide of a loved one.

Hope in God's Hands

Just days before he took his own life, a young man said to a friend, "It's like a train coming at me, and I can't do anything to get out of the way." Suicide is a desperate act of hopelessness often caused by clinical depression. While clinical depression requires professional treatment, God offers a message of hope that can move people to seek such treatment and sustain them during treatment.

Answer the following questions and discuss how these passages remind us that Christian hope is more than a feeling or wishful thinking.

1 Peter 1:3 Why can we be certain that our hope is "living" and never diminishes? _____

Romans 15:13 Hope does not come from hopeful feelings or hopeful circumstances. What is its source? _____

1 Timothy 1:1 What is the connection between "God our Savior" and "Christ Jesus our hope"? _____

Celebrate the comfort and hope God's holding hand gives to life, and sing!

Lord of Life, Who rose in triumph,
conqu'ring death and giving hope,
You have called us and equipped us,
in a sinful world to cope;
Teaching us to love each other,
to befriend and help in strife;
To forgive and seek to comfort,
and preserve the gift of life.

Being God's Hands

Read **1 John 4:11**. Rather than seeing the life issues as controversial issues to be avoided, we see them as opportunities to be God's hands of love and carry out the mission of the LWML!

God has given us the greatest, most positive and powerful *For Life* message in the universe! Human life has value and is worth celebrating because it is the handiwork of God!

In celebration of life as His handiwork, join hands and sing as a closing prayer:

Help us, Lord, to see as You do
life is precious in each stage.
From the unborn to the feeble,
life is precious in each age.
Help us, Lord to be Your witness
and to show the world we care.
So that people may not perish,
but instead Your life may share.

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