

GOD'S PERSPECTIVE ON BIRTH—AND LIFE!

On December 14th, 2021, Emma Kelly—wife of the Indianapolis Colts' center Ryan Kelly—went to the hospital because she was experiencing some complications from her pregnancy. She was 19 weeks along and, upon examination, it was discovered that her daughter's heart **had stopped**.

She was told that there was really no choice other than to **deliver her baby**. She labored for 24 hours and on December 17th, Mary Katherine Kelly made her entrance into the world as **a stillborn**. Emma Kelly wrote: "I was so angry at first that I had to **deliver her**, only for it to become the **biggest blessing** out of this nightmare. It gave Ryan and I the opportunity to hold our little Saint, Mary Kate, before officially saying goodbye to her.

These 19 weeks with her opened our hearts & souls more than we ever imagined possible & I'm forever grateful we had some time, earth-side, with the little girl who made us mom and dad.

She was tiny, perfect and incredibly loved from everyone who knew she existed. I don't think we'll ever understand why God decided to call her home when He did but our faith is unshaken."

<https://www.cnn.com/2021/12/21/sport/ryan-kelly-indianapolis-colts-player-wife-emma-daughter-spt-intl/index.html>

As I read the entire article—of which I only shared a part of with you—I was struck by three things:

1) First, although their daughter was **born dead**—and was only 19 weeks old in the womb—not once was she called a **fetus**... or mass of cells...or tissue—even by the author of the article. Instead, she was referred to as "their baby girl" ...and "daughter...and "baby" ... and "little girl" and "sweet girl."

2) Second, Emma and Ryan Kelly **referred to themselves** as "Mom" and "Dad"—even though their daughter was **never alive** outside her mother's womb. In other words, their perspective was that her life **inside the womb** was what made them parents—not her life **outside** the womb!

3) Third, I was struck by this statement: "She was tiny, perfect and incredibly loved..." Why would Emma Kelly make the statement that her little girl was "**perfect**"—when she obviously wasn't because her heart had stopped beating? I can't say for sure, but probably because she was perfectly **formed**—she was perfectly **human**. She was not missing anything—even though she was only 19 weeks old!

Contrast Ryan and Emma's perspective on life with that of 18-year-old Alexis Avila from NM. On January 7th—just 16 days ago—Alexis gave birth to a baby boy. She allegedly did not know that she was pregnant **until the day before** when she sought medical attention for stomach pain. When she gave birth to her baby boy in her bathroom, she told investigators that she "panicked, [and] did not know what to do or who to call."

So, she cut the umbilical cord, wrapped her newborn son in a towel, put him in a white plastic bag **with trash**, placed that bag inside of a larger, black trash bag—and **drove around** until she decided to toss the bag into a dumpster.

That same day some "garbage pickers" were going through that very dumpster. While picking through trash, they found the baby—**still alive**—after having been in the dumpster for roughly **6 hours**! They did the right thing and immediately called the police. Surveillance video showed Alexis throwing the black garbage bag into the dumpster and she has since been charged with attempted murder and felony child abuse.

I think you'd agree that the Kelly's perspective on life—compared to that of Alexis Avila—is very different.

--For the Kelly's, their heart was broken—but they considered it a **blessing** to hold their **dead** little girl.

--For Alexis Avila, her heart was cold, hard, and unmoved. To her, it was a **curse** to hold a **live baby**, so she threw him into a dumpster hoping he would die!

What about **you**? What is **your perspective** on life? Even more important than **your** perspective—**or mine**—is what is **God's perspective**. How does **God view** life? How **precious is the life** of the **unborn** to God? That is what we're going to look at this morning.

Take your Bibles and turn to Jeremiah 1; please follow along as I read verses 1-6. Although we will be focusing on verse 5, I want to ensure we don't overlook vs 4. "Then the **word of the LORD** came unto me, saying," **God spoke** the words of vs 5 to Jeremiah! They are **God's words**; they are **God's perspective** on Jer's life—**before he was born**! And because God put it in His Word, He wants us—**not just Jeremiah**—to know **His view** on life!

1. God formed Jeremiah—and us

A. God formed Jeremiah

Notice again vs 5. God plainly states to Jeremiah "**I formed thee in the belly.**" 'I made you, Jeremiah. You are not an **accident**.... you are not a **product of chance**...you are not the **result of evolution**. You were **created by me**—the Creator!' And you will see as we go on that what is true of Jeremiah is also true **of us**!

B. God formed people—including you!

Gen 1:26a-27 "And God said, **Let us make man** in our image, after our likeness... ²⁷ **So God created man** in His own image, in the image of God **created He him**; male and female **created He them.**"

Three times—in verse 27—God says that He **created man**! Not the only place God says that.

Psalms 95:6 "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the **Lord our maker**."

Psalms 100:3 "Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is **He that hath made us**, and not we ourselves; we are **His people**, and the sheep of **His pasture**."

God is our maker! We did not happen **by chance**; we did not happen **by evolution**; and we did not "**make**" ourselves. We were created by God! I cannot force you to believe that—but I can show you that that is what God says!

2. God foreknew Jeremiah before He formed him

Notice again vs 5 "Before I formed thee in the belly **I knew thee**;"

That's an amazing thought, isn't it? Before God even created Jeremiah, He **knew** him—meaning He was **acquainted** with him. What does that mean? Does it mean Jeremiah was **in heaven**—like Jesus—before God created a body for him?

No; I don't believe so. What it does mean is that God, who knows the **end from the beginning**, foresaw what Jeremiah was going **to be like**—and what his **life was going to be like**—before his life even started!

Notice the verse on your handout, spoken by David but inspired by God. This is **not an easy** verse to understand—especially the second half—so feel free to study it out on your own.

Psalms 139:16a "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect;"

Most commentators agree that the idea is this: God knew what we would be like before we were fully formed. **Barnes** puts it like this: "Before I had shape or form thou didst see what I was to be."

Psalms 139:16b "and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." **Two suggestions** as to what this half of the verse means:

1) Some suggest it is almost a repetition of the first half. 'In your book, all my body parts, that were formed at various times and in various stages, were known by you before they were even created.'

2) Others point out that the word "members" is *italicized*—meaning it was **not in the original** and was supplied by the translators. Rather than get too technical, here is a note from my **Ryrie Study Bible**: "The last part of the verse means that the **days** of David's life were written in God's book, affirming God's prior **knowledge and plan** of everything in David's life."

Regardless of the exact meaning of Psalm 139:16, we know from Jeremiah 1:5 that God "knew" Jeremiah before He formed him. How? Because He is omniscient—He is all knowing!

Isaiah 46:10 "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

3. God formulated a plan for Jeremiah—before He formed him

Notice again vs 5 "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb **I sanctified thee**, and **I ordained thee a prophet** unto the nations."

Not only did God plainly declare that He **knew** Jeremiah before He formed him, God also said that He **sanctified him**—He **set him apart for a specific task**—before He was born. In other words, God had a plan for Jeremiah before He **made Jeremiah!** Once again, **Jeremiah is not the only** one who said that!

Isaiah made a similar statement. **Isaiah 49:5** “And now, saith the Lord that **formed me from the womb to be His servant**, to bring Jacob again to Him,”

Paul, in the NT, was inspired by God to say basically the same thing. **Gal 1:15-16a** “But when it pleased God, who **separated me from my mother's womb**, and **called me** by His grace,¹⁶ To reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen;”

God had a plan for Jeremiah...and Isaiah...and Paul—**before He created** them! And He had a plan for you and me before He created us, too!

4. God is perfect—and forms people exactly the way He wants to!

Let me say it again—**God is perfect and forms people exactly the way He wants to!** Do you believe that?

Take your Bibles and turn to Exodus 3. In the way of background, Exodus 3 is where God speaks to Moses out of the burning bush. Look at **vs 10**. God is speaking to Moses and says, “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”

Pretty straightforward, right? ‘I am sending you to lead my people out of Egypt.’

In **chapter 4**, Moses begins to **argue with God** and basically says that he is not the right man for the job. In Ex 4:10, we see **one of the excuses** that Moses gives: “And Moses said unto the Lord, O my Lord, **I am not eloquent**, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am **slow of speech**, and of a **slow tongue**.” In other words, ‘I can’t do this, God. I’m a **terrible public speaker!**’

In vs 11, we see God’s response. Notice first what God **did not say!**

--God **didn’t say**, “Moses; you are absolutely correct! **I forgot** that you can’t speak well!”

--And God **didn’t say**, “You’re right, Moses—**I goofed up** when I made you! I’ll pick someone else!”

What God did say? “And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth?”

--**Why** did God ask that? Did God **not know**? Of course, He knew! It was a rhetorical question!

In essence, God was saying this: “**I made your mouth**—don’t you think I know that you are not eloquent?”

God doesn’t stop there, though. Notice the rest of the verse: “... or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind?”

--“dumb” is not a reference to intelligence—it means the inability to speak.

--“deaf, seeing, and blind” are all self-explanatory.

So is God asking Moses these questions because He doesn’t know **who** made the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? No; once again they are rhetorical questions! The **obvious answer is who? God!**

And just to make sure we don’t miss the point; God ends the verse with “**have not I the LORD?**”

Let that sink in... God is telling Moses—and us—that He made our mouth. God creates some people who **can’t speak**...and He creates some people who **can’t hear**. He creates some people that **can see**—and He creates others that **cannot see**.

--God created Mary Kate Kelly exactly the way He wanted to—and she died before birth!

--God created my grandson Kellan exactly the way He wanted to—with a digestive system that never worked properly so he was fed from a tiny tube that put nutrients directly into his blood stream for 6-1/2 years until God took him home.

--And God created Jonny Brown—and each of us—exactly the way He wanted to.

We don’t know **why** that was God’s plan for each of these lives—but we know that it was! God didn’t have a plan for these lives—then “goof up” when He formed them—then had to **readjust** His plan. He **had a plan**—and formed them according to that plan! And even though we may not **know the plan**—or understand **why God** did what He did—we need to count on Him knowing best—and doing what is best!

5. Applications to Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

A. Since God is the giver of life, He is also the taker of it!

It is not up to us to “play God” and decide whether a child in the womb should live or die—that is God’s job! --“But the doctor says they will be handicapped!” So—doctors have **been wrong** before! And even if the doctor **is right**, **God created** that child—that way—**for a purpose!**

Our job is to find the **purpose** for which God gave us this child—not **sit in judgment of God**...and somehow think in our **puny minds** that God didn’t know **what He was doing**...and that **we know best**...and that we should **destroy what God created** because He made a mistake!

You know what God thinks of that attitude? **Deuteronomy 32:39-40** “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. ⁴⁰ For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.” There is one God—and it is not us!

B. Since the unborn can’t speak for themselves, we must speak for them

Notice the verses on your outline from Proverbs 31—the chapter of the virtuous woman. At the beginning of the chapter, **another virtuous woman** gave instructions to her son, King Lemuel. Although **abortion** was not specifically in mind when she gave these instructions, they certainly apply to the unborn!

Proverbs 31:8-9 “**Open thy mouth** for the dumb in the cause of **all such as are appointed to destruction**.

⁹ Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.”

Again, “dumb” does not refer to intelligence—it refers to those who cannot speak!

‘Open thy mouth—speak up—for those who can’t speak and are headed to their destruction at an abortion clinic!

‘Open thy mouth—speak up—judge right, and plead for the life of the poor and needy!’

Is there anyone more poor and needy than an unborn baby on its way to the slaughterhouse?

Lastly, let’s consider some... **6. Applications to life in general**

A. Since God made you, you need to be content with how He made you

I’m talking about the physical realm, of course! We should never be content with where we are at **spiritually**—until we meet Jesus in heaven! But think of the thousands—if not **millions** of people—especially teenagers—who get up in the morning, look in the mirror, and say things like:

--“Why am I so short,” while others are saying, “Why am I so tall?”

Or --“Why do I have brown, curly hair—I want it to be straight and blonde!”

It wouldn’t be so bad if the **discontent** ended there. But it is **worse than that**, isn’t it?

--Now we have, “Why am I guy—I want to be a girl!” And so we encourage **him** to be a “her”—and he is making quite a name for himself at the University of Pennsylvania breaking numerous women’s swimming records! But it’s not just in college, is it? It is in high schools near you—and probably even in Junior high!

Does God have anything to say about what we are now calling “gender confusion”? He certainly does! **Romans 9:20** “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?”

Don’t reply against God! Don’t question **why God** made you the way He made you! Submit to Him, surrender to Him! He is God—you are not! He knows best—you do not!

B. Since God made you, you need to seek His plan for you.

I hesitate to bring this up because there is so much that can be said, and we are almost out of time. So here are a couple of thoughts to chew on.

1) God has a plan for **your** life—and created you with that plan in mind. But it is **His plan**. It is about **Him and His glory**—not about you and your happiness! Don’t misunderstand me. You will be happiest if you seek His plan and follow His will, but it doesn’t work the other way around. If you **seek first your** happiness—outside of God—you will never find it!

2) You may feel you that you have **messed up your life** so badly that there is no point now of even trying to find God’s plan for your life. Listen carefully—it is never too late! God is the master “fixer upper!”

Is 55:7 “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him **return unto the Lord**, and **He will have mercy upon him**; and to our God, for He will **abundantly pardon**.”

--Can God forgive and heal Alexis Avila—the 18-year-old that was confused...and panicked...and threw her newborn baby boy into a dumpster? Yes, He can! Speaking of which, God certainly has a plan for that little boy—that’s why He sent someone to rescue him out of that dumpster!

--Can God forgive a woman who is pregnant and confused—then consents to having her precious unborn child murdered? Yes, He can! He has done so for many—and He will do so for many more! His mercy and ability to pardon has not run out!

You know what is better than God having mercy on us...and abundantly pardoning us...and fixing up the mess we have made out of our lives? It is being made a **new creature**; a new creation!

He doesn’t just forgive the bad—He **makes us new!** **II Cor 5:17** “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. “

--He counts us as being in Christ—declared righteous because we are one with Him; then gives us a new nature...a new desire...a new “want to”!

Do you have that? Do you want that? It is found only in Jesus!

So, what would God **have us do** in light of His Word this morning?

1. First, where are you at in your relationship to God? If you have not come to Him for forgiveness, you are **yet in your sin**. If you **die unforgiven**, you will be separated from God for ever in a place called hell. The only way to escape that is by coming to Christ. John 14:6—Jesus sayeth unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

2. For those of us who have come to Christ, are you seeking His plan for your life? He has one for you! Are you striving to follow it?

3. Third—and one I mentioned last week—is this: the life of the unborn is precious to God. Is it precious to you?

--Are you praying that the laws that currently legalize the murder of the unborn get changed?

--Are you financially supporting Pro-Life organizations like Baptists for Life?

--Do you speak up for life when you have the opportunity to do so?