

James 1:27

“Religion that is pure and undefined before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

Regardless of the level of discord and division, vehemence and vitriol that has characterized this week, a week that shall certainly be penned in the annals of history, we, the Church of Jesus Christ, must realize, and that emphatically, that ours is a remarkable opportunity to show the LOVE, the HOPE, and the WISDOM of the gospel.

Today I stand to recognize the decision made by the United States Supreme Court in the effectual overturning of Roe V. Wade in the Dobbs Case.

It has become difficult to decide which flashpoint in culture the church ought to take time within its worship services to speak to. We live in a climate now where there's an event happening, literally, every other day, in which the Church could indeed say something to it: To voice a witness to the gospel. To bring clarity from Scripture. To bring biblical instruction to God's people. We're now in a moment where those things happen all the time.

But this event, with its nearness to those virtues held so consistently and so concretely in Scripture—the sanctity of ALL Life—the inherent, image-bearing nature of all human beings, born and unborn, the plight of mothers and women, the responsibility of the Church to love, EMPHATICALLY literally every last one of them with the grace and charity of the Lord Christ. Yes. On this one we must speak.

We must speak.

So indeed there is some JUBILATION. God loves the unborn just as much as the born. And on some level we rejoice that those some 890,000 losses of human life known as abortions that were performed last year in the United States will be mitigated to an extent.

There is JUBILATION.

But there must also be ANTICIPATION & PREPARATION.

Many in our nation are outraged right now. And indeed some of you are there as you think about what this means from other perspectives outside the plight of the unborn.

As A. H. Clough has commented, “[THIS] simply means that one highly significant step in the quest to create a culture of life has been taken. But more must follow.”

He went further to say that, "...[several] years of focusing so narrowly on the legal question and calling for the use of power to rightly end *Roe* has atrophied our other necessary muscles which would help us with the works of mercy and reason now called for in our moment."

Translation — the work to promote and espouse to the sanctity of life is, in many ways, just now beginning. We must give a witness of the gospel to the unborn. We must give a witness of the gospel to women and to mothers. Why? Because we must, in this moment, make sacrifices to SEE their humanity and their image bearing nature that we have largely refused to see before today. We must give a witness of the gospel that celebrates not just PRO LIFE BUT WHOLE LIFE!

Indeed in our home state of California nothing really changes for the Church in our Region. If nothing else the responsibility has become more amplified to make abortion, in the eyes of our fellow citizens, perfectly unnecessary. So...

Let the care of the unborn flourish at Southwest.

Let the care of the born flourish at Southwest.

Let the love and nurture of women and mothers flourish at Southwest.

Let adoption and care of orphans in the spirit of James 1:27 flourish at Southwest.

In Jesus' name, Amen.