**You Knit Me Together in My Mother’s Womb**

**The Word**

Read together Psalm 139:1-16

**The Big Idea**

Scripture offers us a view of human life from conception to death that is created by God and worthy of care and protection. We are called to be a community that cares for both mother and child in all circumstances.

**Questions for Discussion**

1. Are there any personal experiences, relationships, or resources that have shaped your perspective on the issue of life in the womb?

2. Consider the Scriptural passages mentioned on Sunday. In your mind, do those present a compelling argument for protecting the life of the unborn from the point of conception? What questions do those passages bring up for you?

3. Consider the comments made about personhood theory. Do you think personhood theory raises some valid points? What other implications do you see coming from personhood theory if any?

4. Consider the suggestions mentioned at the end of Sunday’s sermon for how we can be a faithful community. Which of those stood out to you most and why? Which of those do you personally want to pursue more faithfully, and what might that look like for you?

**Sermon Outline**

I. Scripture

A. Psalm 139:13-16

1. v. 1-6: God’s intimate knowledge of everything about us

2. v. 7-12: God’s inescapable presence wherever we go

3. v. 13-16: God’s intimate design of us in the womb

 a. He formed our “inmost being,” “frame,” “unformed body”/embryo

 b. He “knit” us together (intimately fashioned us)

c. “In the depths of the earth” = a poetic term for the dark, mysterious, inaccessibility of the womb (which we now have access to through sonograms)

d. He has a plan for our lives from the beginning (v. 16)

4. Notice what an integrated and continuous view of the human being this is: “Me, my inner being, frame, unformed substance” all part of the same person in the womb which is the same person writing this Psalm

B. Jeremiah 1:4-5

God had plans and purposes for his life even before he formed him in the womb

C. Luke 1:13-15 and 39-44

1. Notice how John the Baptist is treated as a person in the womb, filled with the Spirit and responsive to the Spirit

 2. Only persons are ever filled with the Spirit in the Bible

D. Sum: Human beings are the wonderful miraculous work of God, recipients of his intimate, creative design, plans, and purposes from womb to tomb.

II. The Early church

A. The early church’s universal view was for the sanctity of life that begins at conception

1. Didache, AD 70: “You shall not procure an abortion, nor destroy a newborn child”

2. Athenagoras: “We regard the fetus in the womb as a created being and therefore an object of God's care.”

B. The early church had a sacrificial practice of rescuing exposed babies and adopting them. This was partially responsible for the rapid spread of the gospel among women (most babies left to be exposed were girls).

III. Our Contemporary Context

 A. Movements shaping abortion in our country

 1. The sexual revolution that disconnected sex from covenant commitment

2. The woman’s liberation movement that required reproductive control to maintain job advancement

3. Modern technology which made abortions safer than ever before

4. Personhood theory which gave a philosophical validation to abortion

 B. Personhood theory

1. Science has clearly shown that human life begins at conception, but personhood theory says, while the embryo/fetus is human life, it is not yet a person, and only persons are deserving of protection.

 2. A person can be determined in one of two ways

a. Some level of development within the human organism (viability, consciousness, ability to reason, make decisions, self-awareness, capacity to communicate, etc.)

1) The major problem with this is there is absolutely no consensus on when a human becomes a person

2) Many bioethicists acknowledge that a 3 day old hasn’t reached personhood by most standards.

3) And what about end of life issues, late stage dementia, unconsciousness, severe disability, etc?

4) “Everything intrinsic to a human being is present from fertilization. There is no single, dramatic turning point that can be empirically detected as transformation into a “person.” From the moment of conception on, the organism merely unfolds the capacities that belong intrinsically to the kind of being it is.” -Nancy Pearcey

b. Personhood is determined why whether that human life is wanted by the parent

c. Notice how this is a disintegrated view of the human person and a low view of the body. If the body hasn’t reached personhood, it is merely a piece of tissue that can be disposed of.

3. The Biblical view, in contrast, is that our dignity/worth is not something we earn through development/accomplishment nor something determined by someone else. Rather it is intrinsic to being made in the image of God who created us and knows us.

IV. How can we be a faithful community?

A. We have an important message to men: Don’t disconnect sex from covenant

B. We honor and support every woman at every turn

1. We honor women’s bodies and the unique (and miraculous) role they play in bringing new life into the world

2. We support women with unexpected pregnancies. We don’t ostracize or stigmatize them. Rather, we support and encourage them.

3. We care for women who have terminated pregnancies. We have compassion for the reasons they wanted to have abortions as well as the challenges many women experience post abortion

- 49% of abortion patients live below the federal poverty level.

 - 64% “felt pressured by others” to have the abortion.

- 54% said they “were not sure about the decision at the time,”

- 50% percent actually “felt abortion was morally wrong.”

4. We sacrificially care for children through supporting foster care and adoption

5. We advocate for good thinking and good policy

6. We Partner with front-line organizations such as Horizon Pregnancy Clinic