

Healing the Culture: Defining the Human Person (Part I)

- Review
 - What is (what *define*) a human *person*?
 - What is (what *defines*) human *life*?
 - Is there really any difference between human *person* and human *life*? → my argument
 - It is in fact a fallacy to distinguish life in person but that you cannot have them separate when in fact they mean the same thing.
 - Because if you do not have life, then you certainly do not have personhood.
 - And if you can claim that there can be life but no person, then you get into all kinds of problems – legal and moral conundrums such as abortion, etc.
 - Now, I am speaking about biological life, not quality-of-life; we will consider the issues with regard to quality-of-life later on this youth group year.
 - Question
 - Does everybody actually agree that life and person are the same thing and therefore equal?
 - If not, or if there is still confusion, then let us talk about it!
 - We need to clear on THIS issue before we can proceed, because everything follows on what is life/what is personhood.
 - Recall the many factors that we agreed should *not* determine human *life/personhood*
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Age
 - Economics
 - Intelligence/IQ
 - Physical appearance? (e.g. ten fingers and toes)
 - Ability to speak, move, think, or feel
 - Religion
 - Sexual orientation
 - Location (e.g. inside the womb vs. outside the womb)
 - Ability to care for oneself
 - Recall the *Imago Dei*
- Now, given all of that, let us review where we ended last week: the definition of human person that I proposed to you (three parts, for fairly easy memorization)
 - A being possessing an intrinsic guiding force...
 - Genetic
 - A soul
 - Both
 - ...that compels it toward fulfillment...
 - ...through unconditional, perfect, and even infinite Truth, Love, Goodness, Beauty, and Being
- (Discussion of this definition)
- A simpler, clearer definition might be this (again, in three parts)
 - A being comprised of an internal drive...
 - ...a drive that yearns for absolute perfection and, thus, perfect fulfillment...
 - ...a perfection found in the so-called “Transcendentals”
- Now, the Critical Assumption
 - Given the countless abuses against human personhood throughout history, to keep history from repeating itself, we must assume that *every being of human origin must be considered a person*
 - In other words: when in doubt, lay out → when in doubt whether something of human origin (such as a zygote or a fetus) is also a human person, we must err on the side of life.