

Daily Devotional, November 20, 2020

'Stem Cell Research', (Genesis 9:5-6)

“Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of every man’s brother I will require the life of man. “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.”” (Genesis 9:5-6, NKJV)

Stem cell research is an ethically questionable science. Research that is done on deliberately created human embryos for the stated purpose of finding new ways to treat medical conditions such as Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, or muscular dystrophy is ethically problematic. Recently, it has been noted that some firms may be using or planning to use stem cells in order to research, trial, or create Covid-19 vaccines. Not being a scientist, I cannot confirm whether or not this is the case, but some have raised the alarm that it may be the case, and we ought to be vigilant. Christians are not against medical research in and of itself. God certainly can and does use medical science to heal people and cure diseases. However, Christians must look to Scripture as the authority in all matters of faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16). Sinful means do not justify reaching a ‘good’ end. The Apostle Paul puts it this way: ***“And why not say, ‘Let us do evil that good may come’”*** (Romans 3:8)? This will not always be popular and will sometimes bring with it a measure of persecution. When commanded to stop preaching Jesus by the council, ***“Peter and the other apostles answered and said: ‘We ought to obey God rather than men’”*** (Acts 5:27-29).

Our objection is that stem cell research involves creating human life for the purpose of destroying it. An embryo constitutes a human life. Scripture asserts that life begins at conception (Job 3:16; Psalm 139:14-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44). Further, we know from science that the birth of human life—the ***“formation of inmost parts”***—occurs the moment an egg cell is fertilized by a sperm cell. Each cell contributes half of the new person’s total hereditary material. We therefore have a new person in the embryonic state. To murder people that we may further research is morally reprehensible. How can God bless that? In fact, his attributes of justice and mercy demand that He judge us for it (Psalm 9:4-10, 72:1-2). If we continue to go down the road of ethical irresponsibility, there is no limit to the evil we are capable of perpetrating in the name of scientific progress (Genesis 6:5; Romans 1:18-32).

What then shall we do? We can begin by being salt and light in our homes, community, and workplaces (Matthew 5:13-16). We can educate them on the ethical irresponsibility of stem cell research. We can do it from a biblical perspective for those who accept its authority. We can also do it from the standpoint of the ethical problems associated with cloning and ‘playing with human life’ for those who operate from a secular mindset, appealing to their consciences (Romans 2:14-15). It is also important to note that stem cell research has not provided any cure for any disease to

date and may result in introducing new genetically based problems and diseases. We can vote for those men and women who consistently cast their votes for life. It is an oxymoron for someone to be pro-life and in favor of stem cell research. Finally, and most importantly, we can pray. After all, issues of life and death belong to the Lord (Psalm 68:20). It is also within His power to bring to pass real change for the good in the hearts of men and women (Psalm 3:8, 62:11-12). We must be aware of, and if necessary engage in the discussion on this issue to the best of our abilities as spiritual watchmen (and women), but nevertheless trust our God that His will be done. Amen.