

God is pro-life.

That is not meant as a political statement, but a theological fact.

Everything God is, everything God has said and done creates, promotes, preserves, and nourishes life.

- Cosmic life
- Planetary life
- Oceanic life
- Biological life
- Animal and plant life
- Human life

From the story of creation in Genesis,

to the story of Noah and the ark of restoration,

to the story of the Passover and Exodus

and fulfillment of the covenant promises in the Promised Land,

to the restoration of the exiles;

from the incarnation in Jesus and his resurrection from the dead

to the river of life, the tree of life, and the new Jerusalem in Revelation –

In the whole biblical narrative,

God acts to overcome death with life.

God is pro-life, but even more accurately, God *is* life.

The Holy Name is life– Yahweh – I AM –

God who is, who was, and who is to come,

the first and last, the beginning and the End
– the Alpha and Omega.

In iconography, we often see the Greek letters Omicron Wmega Nu in the halo above Christ's head, which signify the Greek translation of Yahweh, "The One who is" or "The One who is Being".

God is Life. God is eternal life. God is immortal.

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Humanity is mortal.

Not by God's intention, but by consequence of human ambition to be in control.

It was not sufficient to be created in the image of God;

The serpent offered the false opportunity to act like God, to think like God, knowing good and evil.

According to the serpent, having eaten the fruit of the tree forbidden by God, humanity could judge for itself – act on its own authority – like God.

Idolatry has consequences, and for humanity, it was to be cast out of the garden in which God provides everything to those who trust, and in which the tree of life grows.

Humanity outside God's garden is subject to death, mortality, suffering.

So, the story of salvation begins, as we read in Genesis.

Now, at the end of the written story, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ to John, we hear Jesus say this:

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have access to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.

This is the last pearl in the strand of 7 formed by beatitudes in Revelation that are the golden thread binding the message of life.

Washing the robes is an image for baptism – baptism into the victory and sovereignty of Christ, as spoken in Genesis 49:11.

Baptism into the death of Christ, as spoken in Revelation 7 – *they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Think about that image for a moment: the blood of the Lamb –

Jesus' blood, which includes the blood of lives lost in warfare,

- The blood of 6 million Jews,
- of George Floyd,
- Erin Walker,
- Ahmaud Arbery, the Emanuel 9,
- and shoppers in Buffalo, NY –
- the blood of 908,000 aborted lives in 2020 alone,
- of two-year-old Dante Mullinix, and all deaths by abuse
- and the blood of every sinner who has ever lived – including you and me –

Jesus' blood shed on the cross covers the bloodshed human sin has caused with the purity of his sacrifice.

As spoken by God through the prophet Isaiah 1:4:

*“Though your sins have stained you like the color red, you can become **white** like snow;*

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have access to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.

The access to the tree of life that God barricaded because of human sin, has now been opened by Jesus Christ for those who are baptized into his death and resurrection, who live trusting in him for forgiveness.

We get to share in the immortal glory of God as life.

We get to eat the healing and reconciling fruit of the tree of life in God's new creation.

...

But this good news is not meant to be just private grace – far from it!

This is not about me gaining immortality and walking through the front door of God's realm.

It is about US sharing that life together and bringing as many as we can with us.

The same God who invites us to the font to drink the water of life makes us to be inviters of others.

The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let everyone who hears say, "Come."

Did you hear that?

We are to invite others to come to Jesus,

 come to the water of life that flows in every font,

 come to the life that is victorious over death in all its forms.

It is not our job to make people come,

 or to bully them into believing,

 or to insist that our beliefs are the right ones.

We are simply to point to Jesus who is risen from the dead and say,
“Come.”

We show people hope and say, “Come”.

We hold onto truth and say, Come”

We forgive those who hurt us, and say “There’s more where that came
from – come”

We sit down in the dumps with those who despair and say, “I know
someone who loves you more– Come”

We hold the hands of the elder who wonders if life is still worth living,
and say “Yes, come”

We drink in the words of Jesus:

*And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the
water of life as a gift*

Let us stay hydrated with the life of Jesus Christ and show others the
way to him.

Alleluia! Christ is risen!