

Cherishing Life

By Elder Neil L. Andersen
Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Elu väärtustamine

Vanem Neil L. Andersen
Kaheteistkümne Apostli Kvoorum

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Life is a most precious part of our Father's perfect plan, and by His decree we cherish and preserve life.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, taught us, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

A bishop in Utah recently shared with me an outpouring of love in his ward for a young woman and her family. Through a series of beautiful events, the parents determined to return to the Savior and His Church. During the time they were distant from the Church, their teenage daughter was involved with a young man. Returning, this precious daughter felt immense love from her Heavenly Father during a Young Women testimony meeting. She determined to more fully live the commandments. She wrote, "I began the repentance process with my bishop."

Soon after, she became ill. In her words: "[A] test showed ... I was pregnant. I ... began to cry. ... My dad wrapped me in his arms and assured me everything [would] be OK. ... My boyfriend ... asked me to get rid of the baby. ... I declined."

Care for Those in Need

She continued: "I have received so much love and support from our ward family. It has been overwhelming. [My] bishop and Young Women president have gone above and beyond to show their love and support. ... I have seen the Lord's hand ... guiding me and my family. ... A ward such as mine is the family everyone needs, especially a young woman in my position."

She and her family, and her ward family, lov-

Elu on meie Isa täiusliku plaani kõige hinnalitem osa ja Tema korraldusel me väärtustame ja hoiame elu.

Meie Päästja Jeesus Kristus õpetas meile: „Sellest tunnevad kõik, et teie olete minu jüngrid, kui teil on armastus isekeskis!”

Üks piiskop Utah's jagas minuga hiljuti, kuidas tema koguduses näidati suurt armastust ühe noore naise ja tema pere vastu. Paljude kaunitest sündmustest tulemusena otsustasid vanemad naasta Päästja juurde ja Tema Kirikusse. Sel ajal, kui nad Kirikust eemal olid, oli nende teismeline tütar seotud ühe noormehega. Kirikusse naastes tundis see armas tütar Noorte Naiste tunnistuste koosolekul oma Taevase Isa suurt armastust. Ta otsustas paremini käskude järgi elada. Ta kirjutas: „Alustasin meeleparandusprotsessi oma piiskopiga.”

Peagi pärast seda jäi ta haigeks. Ta rääkis: „Test näitas .. , et ma olin rase. Ma .. hakkasin nutma. .. Mu isa võttis mind oma käte vahele ja kinnitas, et kõik saab korda. .. Mu poiss-sõber .. palus mul lapsest lahti saada. .. Ma keeldusin.”

Abivajajate eest hoolitsemine

Ta jätkas: „Olen saanud meie koguduseperelt nii palju armastust ja tuge. See on olnud ülevoolav. [Minu] piiskop ja Noorte Naiste juhataja on teinud rohkem, kui võiks oodata, et näidata oma armastust ja toetust. .. Olen näinud Issanda kätt .. juhatamas mind ja mu perekonda. .. Selline kogudus nagu minu kogudus on see pere, mida kõik vajavad, eriti minu olukorras olev noor naine.”

Tema, tema pere ja kogudusepere võtsid selle

ingly welcomed her baby boy this past February.

President Russell M. Nelson said, “A hallmark of the Lord’s true and living Church will always be an organized ... effort to minister to individual children of God ... [ministering with loving-kindness] to the one, just as He did.”

Helping Righteous Choices

When a single woman discovers that she is expecting an unanticipated child, health concerns, spiritual turmoil, embarrassment, financial worries, educational questions, marriage uncertainty, and the sadness of shattered dreams can, in a moment of pain and bewilderment, lead a thoughtful woman to take steps that will bring deep pain and regret.

For any listening who have experienced the deep pain and regret from having or participating in an abortion, please remember: Although we cannot change the past, God can heal the past. Forgiveness can come through the miracle of His atoning grace as you turn to Him with a humble and repentant heart.

Two words are often attached to the sanctity of mortal birth: life and choice. Life is a most precious part of our Father’s perfect plan, and by His decree we cherish and preserve life; and we choose the continuation of life once conceived. We also treasure the gift of choice, of moral agency—helping to strengthen righteous choices approved by God that bring eternal happiness.

When a woman and a man are in such a fragile time, facing a crucial choice, our words, our hands, our hearts—spiritually, emotionally, and financially—can bless them to feel the Savior’s love and, as President Henry B. Eyring has said, bring a clarifying adjustment to their spiritual eyes from “what they think they see” to “what they cannot yet see.”

The Doctrine of Mortal Life

President Dallin H. Oaks said: “Our attitude toward abortion is not based on revealed knowledge of when mortal life begins. ... It is fixed by our knowledge that ... all of the spirit children of God must come to this earth for a glorious purpose, and that individual identity began long before conception and will continue for all the eternities to come.”

The word of the Lord concerning the unborn, given voice through the First Presidency

aasta veebruaris armastavalt vastu tema pisipoja.

President Russell M. Nelson ütles: „Issanda tõelise ja elava Kiriku tunnuseks on alati organiseeritud .. püüdlused teenida Jumala lapsi .., [teenides armastava lahkusega] seda ühte, just nagu Tema seda tegi.”

Õigemeelsed valikud

Kui vallaline naine avastab, et on planeerima ta lapseootel, võivad tervisemured, hingeline segadus, piinlikkus, rahamured, haridusküsimused, ebakindlus abielu suhtes ja purunenud unistuste kurbus panna mõtterägastikus naise astuma samme, mis toovad kaasa sügava valu ja kahetsuse.

Kõigile kuulajatele, kes on kogenud abordi tegemise või selles osalemise pärast sügavat valu ja kahetsust, pidage meeles: kuigi me ei saa minevikku muuta, võib Jumal minevikuvalu parandada. Andestamine võib tulla Tema lepitava armu ime kaudu, kui pöördute alandliku ja kahetseva südamega Tema poole.

Sureliku sünni pühadusega seostatakse sageli kahte sõna: elu ja valik. Elu on meie Isa täiusliku plaani kõige hinnalisem osa ja Tema korraldusel väärtustame ja hoiame elu ning me valime kord eostatud elu jätkumise. Me peame kalliks ka moraalse valikuvabaduse andi – aidates tugevda õigemeelseid valikuid, mille Jumal on heaks kiitnud.

Kui naine ja mees seisavad sellel hapral ajal silmitsi otsustava valikuga, võivad meie sõnad, käed, meie süda – vaimselt, emotsionaalselt ja rahaliselt – neid õnnistada, et nad tunneksid Päästja armastust, ja aidates avada nende vaimseid silmi, nagu president Henry B. Eyring on öelnud, alates sellest, mida nad arvavad nägevat, kuni selleni, „mida nad veel ei näe”.

Sureliku elu õpetus

President Dallin H. Oaks ütles: „Meie suhtumine aborti ei põhine ilmutatud teadmisel sellest, millal surelik elu algab. .. Seda kinnitab meie teadmine, et .. kõik Jumala vaimulapsed peavad siia maa peale tulema hiilgava eesmärgi nimel ja see isiklik identiteet sai alguse ammu enne viljastumist ja jätkub kõigi tulevaste igavikkude jooksul.”

Esimese Presidentkonna ja Kaheteistkümne Apostli Kvoorumi kaudu kõlanud Issanda sõna

and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, has never varied and echoes the words of prophets through the ages, giving divine clarity to what the Lord has asked of us.

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes in the sanctity of human life. Therefore, the Church opposes elective abortion for personal or social convenience, and counsels its members not to submit to, perform, encourage, pay for, or arrange for such abortions.

“The [Lord] allows for possible exceptions ... when:

Pregnancy results from rape or incest, or

A competent physician determines that the life or health of the mother is in serious jeopardy, or

A competent physician determines that the fetus has severe defects that will not allow the baby to survive beyond birth.”

The First Presidency continues: “Abortion is a most serious matter. [Even in these rare situations] it should be considered only after the persons responsible have received confirmation through prayer” and counseled with others.

Thirty years ago, the Lord’s prophets issued a proclamation to the world. It includes these words:

“We ... declare that God has commanded that the sacred powers of procreation are to be employed only between man and woman, lawfully wedded as husband and wife.

“We declare the means by which mortal life is created to be divinely appointed. We affirm the sanctity of life and of its importance in God’s eternal plan.”

Nurturing and protecting life that is yet unborn is not a political position. It is a moral law confirmed by the Lord through His prophets.

Speaking More Openly

A statement by President J. Reuben Clark Jr., who served in the First Presidency, beautifully describes our youth today: “The youth of the Church are hungry for things of the Spirit; they are eager to learn the gospel, and they want it straight, undiluted. They want to know about

sündimata inimeste kohta ei ole kunagi muutunud ja kordab prohvetite sõnu läbi aegade, andes meile jumaliku selgusega teada, mida Issand on meil teha palunud.

„Viimse Aja Pühade Jeesuse Kristuse Kirik usub elu pühadusse. Seetõttu on Kirik vastu vabatahtlikule abordile, mida tehakse isikliku või sotsiaalse mugavuse pärast, ning juhendab Kiriku liikmeid, et nad ei laseks aborti teha, ei viiks seda läbi, ei julgustaks selle läbiviimist, ei maksaks selle eest ega korraldaks sedalaadi aborte.

„[Issand] lubab .. teha erandi vaid järgmistel juhtudel.

Rasedus on vägistamise või intsesti tagajärg.

Kvalifitseeritud arst on teinud kindlaks, et ema elu ja tervis on tõsisel ohul.

Kvalifitseeritud arst on kindlaks teinud, et lootel on tõsised arenguhäired, mille tagajärjel ei jääks ta pärast sündi elama.”

Esimene Presidendid jätkab: „Abort on väga tõsine teema ning seda tuleks kaaluda alles pärast seda, kui asjaosalised on vestelnud Kiriku kohalike juhtidega ning tunnevad isikliku palve kaudu, et otsus on õige. [Isegi nendes harvades olukordades tuleks seda] kaaluda alles pärast seda, kui asjaosalised .. tunnevad isikliku palve kaudu, et otsus on õige”, ning on pidanud nõu teistega.

Kolmkümmend aastat tagasi andsid Issanda prohvetid maailmale läkituse. See sisaldab järgmisi sõnu:

„Me kuulutame .. , et Jumala käsul tohivad püha sigitusjõudu kasutada ainult mees ja naine, kes on seaduslikus abielus.

Me kuulutame, et viis, kuidas surelik elu luuakse, on jumalikult määratud. Me kinnitame, et elu on Jumala igaveses plaanis püha ja tähtis.”

Veel sündimata elu kosutamine ja kaitsmine ei ole poliitiline seisukoht. See on moraalseadus, mille Issand on oma prohvetite kaudu kinnitanud.

Avameelsed vestlused

President J. Reuben Clark noorem, kes teenis Esimeses Presidendikonnas, kirjeldas ilusasti meie noori tänapäeval: „Kiriku noored tunnevad nälga Vaimu asjade järele, nad on innukad õppima evangeeliumi ning soovivad seda vahetult, lahjendamata. Nad tahavad teada .. meie tõekspä-

... our beliefs; they want to gain testimonies of [the] truth. They are ... inquirers, seekers after truth.” Let us speak more often with faith and compassion to our youth in our homes, and with each other in our Relief Society and elders quorum meetings, about the Lord’s law of chastity, the sanctity of life, and the care of the unborn and their mothers.

A dear sister wrote to me of an experience she had decades ago: “As a 17-year-old ... , I found myself pregnant with little to no support from my boyfriend. I felt ashamed and alone [but I] never considered [an abortion]. ... I [had] my loving family and my bishop, with whom I met regularly for guidance. ... I turned to God. I studied the scriptures ... and prayed [and] found strength through my Savior and the repentance process. ... I received an answer [to my prayers] that I could not deny. ... It was heartbreaking, but I knew I would be placing my daughter for adoption. ... I prayed for courage [and] felt the Savior’s love so clearly through repentance, I know that God ... answers prayers and strengthens us.”

A loving couple adopted the precious baby girl and taught her the gospel. She is now married with a beautiful family of her own.

At times, profoundly difficult and agonizing uncertainty can accompany the protection of life.

Recently a young couple whom Kathy and I love wrote me about the precious baby they were expecting.

The father wrote: “[When my wife was] 10 weeks pregnant we found out that our miracle baby has the genetic condition of trisomy 21, commonly known as Down syndrome. We felt the pressure ... from the medical field to consider termination. A few weeks later we discovered ... our unborn child ... would require multiple heart surgeries in her first year of life. Throughout this process as we prayed fervently for divine help, ... we have felt the Spirit give us comfort. We received revelation and understanding that our daughter is an elite child of Heavenly Father and has an immense desire to be in our family and to come to earth.”

The baby’s mother wrote: “[We] were completely shocked, confused, and honestly devastated by the news. ... When I was 14 weeks pregnant, we found out that our baby had multiple congenital heart defects, one that could be potentially fatal. We saw countless doctors and special-

damistest, nad tahavad saada tunnistust .. tõest. Nad [on] .. uurijad ja tõetsijad.” Rääkigem sage-damini usu ja kaastundega meie noortele meie kodudes ning Abiühingu ja vanemate kvoorumi koosolekutel Issanda kõlbelise puhtuse seadusest, elu pühadusest ning sündimata laste ja nende emade eest hoolitsemisest.

Üks kallis õde kirjutas mulle oma aastakümnete-tagusest kogemusest: „[17-aastasena] avastasin, et olen rase. Minu poiss-sõber toetas mind vaid vähesel määral, kui üldse. Tundsin häbi ja üksildust, [kuid ma] ei mõelnud kunagi [abordi tegemisele]. .. Mul [oli] mu armastav perekond ja piiskop, kellega kohtusin regulaarselt, et saada nõu. .. Pöördusin Jumala poole. Uurisin pühakirju .. ja palvetasin [ning] leidsin jõudu oma Päästja ja meelesparandusprotsessi kaudu. .. Sain [oma palvetele] vastuse, mida ei saanud eitada. .. See oli südantlõhestav, kuid teadsin, et annan oma tütre adopteerimiseks. .. Palvetasin, et leida julgust, [ja] tundsin meelesparanduse kaudu selgelt Päästja armastust. Ma tean, et Jumal .. vastab palvetele ja annab meie jõudu.”

Üks armastav paar adopteeris selle pisi tüdruku ja õpetas talle evangeeliumi. Ta on nüüd abielus ja tal on oma kaunis perekond.

Elu kaitsmisega võib mõnikord kaasneda sügavalt raske ja piinav ebakindlus.

Hiljuti kirjutas mulle üks noorpaar, keda Kathy ja mina armastame, armsast lapsest, keda nad ootasid.

Isa kirjutas: „[Kui mu naine oli] 10 nädalat rase, saime teada, et meie imelapsel on geneetiline seisund trisoomia 21, mida tavaliselt tuntakse Downi sündroomina. Tundsime meditsiinivaldkonna survet kaaluda raseduse katkestamist. Paar nädalat hiljem avastasime, et meie sündimata laps vajab tema esimesel eluaastal mitmeid südameoperatsioone. Kogu selle protsessi jooksul, kui me tulihingeliselt jumalikku abi palusime .. , oleme tundnud, kuidas Vaim meid trööstib. Saime ilmutuse ja mõistmise, et meie tütar on Taevase Isa väljavalitud laps ja tal on tohutu soov olla meie peres ja tulla maa peale.”

Beebi ema kirjutas: „[Me] olime uudisest täiesti šokeeritud, segaduses ja ausalt öelda laastatud. .. Kui olin 14. nädalat rase, saime teada, et meie lapsel on mitu sünnipärast südamedefekti, mis võivad lõppeda surmaga. 10.–18. rasedusnädalast alates nägime lugematul hulgal arste ja

ists from 10–18 weeks' gestation. ... At each of our appointments, we were asked if we wanted to continue with the pregnancy or terminate. ... The Savior healed my heart and gave me a sense of peace and excitement about our baby girl. ... [Heavenly Father] has shown me time and time again that He has a perfect plan for me [and] I trust Him."

They excitedly welcomed their baby girl exactly one week ago today. She is theirs and they are hers forever.

Undaunted faith and remarkable courage are hallmarks of disciples of Jesus Christ.

A Remarkable Example of Faith

Through the years, I have had the privilege of meeting with men and women who have humbly sought to return to the covenant path and to their priesthood and temple blessings many years after a loss of their membership.

On one occasion, I was to interview a man on behalf of the First Presidency for the restoration of his priesthood and temple blessings.

After his marriage in the holy temple, and after having three wonderful children, the man was unfaithful to his wife and his sacred covenants. A single woman became pregnant and wanted an abortion.

The husband's saintly wife pleaded with the woman to have the baby and promised that she would raise the child, once he was born, with her own children.

The single woman thoughtfully agreed not to end the pregnancy.

It had now been 10 years. The humble sister sitting in front of me loved the boy as her own and told me of her husband's efforts to make amends and to love and care for her and the family. The father wept as she spoke.

How could this noble woman of God take a child as her own who could be a daily reminder of the unfaithfulness of her husband? How? Because she found strength through Jesus Christ and she believed in the sacredness of life, the holiness of life. She knew the unborn child was a child of God, innocent and pure.

My dear brothers and sisters, the diminishing love for unborn children worldwide is a grave concern. God cherishes life. It is His work and His glory to bring immortality and eternal life to His children. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we

spetsialiste. ... Igal kohtumisel küsiti meilt, kas soovime rasedust jätkata või selle katkestada. ... Päästja tervendas mu südame ja andis mulle rahu ja elevuse tunde seoses meie väikese tüdrukuga. ... [Taevane Isa] on mulle ikka ja jälle näidanud, et Tal on minu jaoks täiuslik plaan, [ja] ma usaldan Teda."

Nad tervitasid õhinal oma tütrekest täpselt nädal tagasi. Ta kuulub neile ja nemad temale igavesti.

Kartmatu usk ja tähelepanuväärne julgus on Jeesuse Kristuse jüngrite tunnused.

Imetlusväärne usu eeskuju

Aastate jooksul on mul olnud au kohtuda meeste ja naistega, kes on alandlikult püüdnud naasta lepingurajale ning oma preesterluse ja templiõnnistuste juurde palju aastaid pärast liikmesuse kaotamist.

Ühel korral pidin Esimese Presidentkonna nimel vestlema ühe mehega tema preesterluse ja templiõnnistuste taastamiseks.

Pärast abiellumist pühas templis ja pärast kolme imelise lapse saamist murdis see mees truudust oma naisele ja pühadele lepingutele. Üks vallaline naine jäi rasedaks ja soovis aborti.

Mehe vaga abikaasa palus naisel laps ilma le tuua ja lubas, et ta kasvatab lapse koos oma lastega üles.

Vallaline naine nõustus rasedust mitte katkestama.

Nüüd oli sellest möödunud kümme aastat. Minu ees istuv alandlik õde armastas poissi kui enda oma ja rääkis mulle oma mehe pingutustest halba heastada ning teda ja nende perekonda armastada ning nende eest hoolitseda. Isa nuttis naise sõnade peale.

Kuidas sai see üllas jumalanaine võtta omaks lapse, kes võis olla igapäevaseks meeldetuletuseks tema mehe truudusetusest? Kuidas? Sest ta leidis jõudu Jeesuse Kristuse kaudu ja ta uskus elu pühadusse, elu pühalikkusesse. Ta teadis, et see sündimata laps on Jumala laps, süütu ja puhas.

Mu kallid vennad ja õed, kogu maailmas on tõsiseks mureks kaduv armastus sündimata laste vastu. Jumal väärtustab elu. Tema töö ja Tema hiilgus on tuua oma lastele surematus ja igavene elu. Jeesuse Kristuse jüngritena me väärtustame

cherish life. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." - May we share our love even more abundantly with those who need us so desperately. I express my love for you and our Heavenly Father's love for His children coming to earth. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

elu. „Sellest tunnevad kõik, et teie olete minu jüngrid, kui teil on armastus isekesis!” Jagagem oma armastust veelgi rikkalikumalt nendega, kes meid nii hädasti vajavad. Ma väljendan oma armastust teie vastu ja meie Taevase Isa armastust Tema laste vastu, kes tulevad maa peale. Jeesuse Kristuse nimel, aamen.