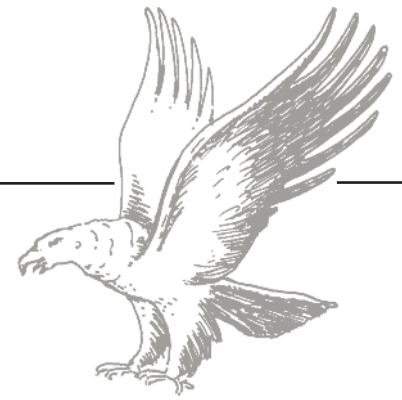


# Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”  
Isaiah 40:31*



August 9, 2015

## When Human Life Is Cheap

The high regard for human life that has been enjoyed throughout much of Western Civilization was purchased at great cost. Our society is now throwing it away. Many will suffer as a result.

*“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths” (Isa. 59:7).*

*“Know that the Lord, He is God; it is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture” (Psa. 100:3).*



In his book *How Christianity Changed the World* (2004), Alvin J. Schmidt documents the calloused attitudes that early Christians encountered in the Greco-Roman world of their day. The widespread practice of infanticide, infant abandonment, abortion, gladiator games, gratuitous executions, and even human sacrifice created an environment in which human life was considered cheap. Isaiah’s commentary from several centuries earlier summarized the mindset well: “They make haste to shed innocent blood; . . . wasting and destruction are in their paths.”

It took several centuries, but Christianity—building upon an earlier foundation of Jewish law—changed that

culture and turned public opinion against these practices. Christianity championed the concept that mankind is the creation of a benevolent God, and that all human beings should be treated with honor and dignity. Western civilization has generally enjoyed the fruits of that nobler ethos ever since.

Today, in our post-Christian culture, that lofty view of human life is crumbling, and the degraded perspective that was rooted out so long ago is now making a comeback. Consider examples:

*Abortion.* Our society goes nuts over one lion killed by a poacher, but can’t be bothered by the harvesting of baby parts—by the millions—in abortion clinics. There is nothing wrong with saving baby seals and baby whales, but why are efforts to save these baby humans greeted with yawns?

*Slavery.* Author Benjamin Skinner claims there are 27 million slaves worldwide today—“more slaves than at any point in human history” (*A Crime So Monstrous*, 2008). Whether for sexual or economic exploitation, this number of human beings in forced bondage consti-

tutes a major step backwards for the human race.

*Euthanasia.* Some ethicists (that’s right—people who make a living studying ethics) are openly promoting the legalized killing of the elderly and the severely disabled, in the name of “decency.” Of course, left unanswered is the question of who gets to pick which humans need to be put down.

*Murder.* A deranged shooter kills a dozen people in a movie theatre and the press screams for a national conversation on violence. Yet multiples of that number are slain *every weekend* in large inner cities (where the victims are usually poor blacks) and nobody says a word. The glaring double standard suggests that violence is not really the target.

This devaluing of human life is a symptom of a much deeper problem: the decline of respect for the God who made us all. When we cast Him aside in our thinking, it won’t take long to see a corresponding decline in respect for the rights of others. Our task, like that of the OT prophets and the early Christians, is to point people back to God.

– David King