

## There Was a Date Set for My Death

There was once a date scheduled for my death. My mother was only a couple of years older than I am now when the two pink lines formed and she found out about me. At a glance, her life was a raving success. She had built a professional modeling career for herself since the age of thirteen, her grades were as near perfect as anyone could manage, and she was set to sail off to a prestigious college on a wave of scholarships. She had everything and more that our society deems successful for a newly-fledged adult. But she was not happy. She was depressed, self-destructive, and suicidal. She scheduled a termination appointment for me at the same Planned Parenthood my older sibling was aborted the year before.

Throughout the tapestry of our society, we see an emphasis on external outcomes, goals, and achievements as what gives worth to a person. This mindset is stitched into “success” stories. The idea that high productivity and far-reaching impact are what makes an individual valuable is burned into the psyche via social media. We praise the child actors and young influencers. Those who achieve the most, the quickest. Talent is a beautiful thing, worthy of high praise. But I often feel a deep ache. When I fall short of the mark I aimed for there is always a temptation to go *beyond* assessing what I could learn or do better. A voice whispers that I am useless, worthless, and a failure. There is a steady invitation to tie my identity and my worth to my ability to achieve. This ache gets worse when I compare my shortcomings to the successes of others. This is everywhere in our society. I hear it in my friend's hollow voices after they don't get a callback, make varsity, or score the grade they want on the SAT. The problem is that we have allowed ourselves to be trained to see our worth in terms of outcomes.

I am pro-life because we as a society are desperately in need of a reminder that life matters not because of what it achieves but purely because it is life. Our worth is not tied to accomplishments. We are valuable because human life has an intrinsic value from an embryo until we draw our final breath. In the womb, the young, the inexperienced, the disadvantaged, the differently abled, the terminally ill, and the elderly. All life has equal worth.

There was a date set for my death. But since I can type these words to you it doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to deduce that the appointment was not kept. My mother never walked into that Planned Parenthood. So because I am alive to ask you, reader, my questions to you are these: what could happen if we lived out the belief that our worth is unchangeable regardless of life circumstances or achievements? What if we believed in the intrinsic value of life?