

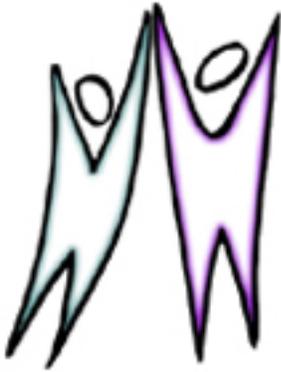
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LESSONS FOR SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE SUNDAY
A Sunday School Curriculum for All Ages

Life Matters
WORLDWIDE

P.O. Box 3158, Grand Rapids, MI 49501
(616) 257-6800, 1-800-968-6086
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- Rev. Dean Parham, Pastor, Adult Ministries

Without their expertise and cooperation, this curriculum would not have been possible.

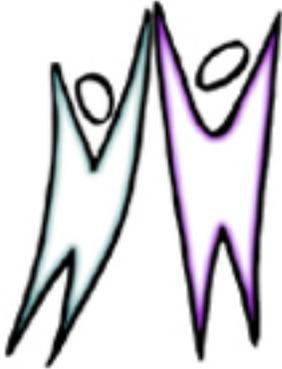
This curriculum includes lesson plans for:

- Preschool/Kindergarten
- Primary (Grades 1-3)
- Junior (Grades 4-6)
- Junior and Senior High School
- Adults

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“Let the little children come unto me!”

Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

Objectives - After this lesson the children should:

- Understand that Jesus thinks children are special
- Trust Jesus in order to become one of God’s children
- Participate in activities that communicate a person’s uniqueness to God

“Getting Started” Activity (choose one)

1. LITTLE GUEST VISITOR

Arrange ahead of time with one of your children’s families to bring in a baby to explore during the time that children arrive. Have your guest and parent come 10 minutes early just in case, with a diaper bag full of things babies need (diaper, rattle/toys, bottle/food, diaper rash ointment, spit-up rag, no-tear shampoo, etc.).

Have older brother/sister make an introduction telling some of their favorite things about the special guest. Mom and/or Dad can then bring out items from the diaper bag, one at a time allowing children to guess what they are and what they are used for.

Discussion:

- Share a story about when you were a baby.
- Why do you think babies need older people?
- How can you tell this baby trusts his/her parents?

2. BABY BOOK SHOW-N-TELL

Have children bring their baby books to church with them (you can send a reminder home with parents the week before or call/e-mail some parents during the week). As they arrive have them take turns sharing stories about the pictures inside.



Discussion:

- Point out people who have taken care of you through the years.
- Trusting people is an important part of being a kid. Do any of your pictures show that you are trusting others?

Bible Lesson - Mark 10:13-16

“SAD FACES/HAPPY FACES” STORY TELLING

You will need:

- A Bible
- An overhead projector
- Posterboard, or white board, and
- An appropriate marker



Say, “Some people don’t treat children nicely. What do children do that people do not like?” (Hints: They are noisy, spill their milk, have runny noses, make messes, etc.)

As they share ideas one-at-a-time, draw a scowling face with the marker. (This can easily be achieved by drawing two circles near each other for eyes with black bullets for pupils, an upside down “U” for the frown and then a heavily drawn “V” above and between the circles for the scowl effect.) Draw a scowling face (some big, some small) each time someone shares an idea why people do not treat children nicely.

Say, “Today we will learn that Jesus loves children! What do you think

he says to people who do not treat children nicely (point to all the scowls)?
Well, let's find out!"

Read Mark 10:13-16. As you read, draw sad or happy faces to represent:

- Children when the disciples told them to go away
- Jesus as he rebuked his disciples
- Jesus as he welcomed the children
- Children as they were cuddled by Jesus

Lesson Reinforcing Activity

"WE ARE GOING TO GO SEE JESUS"

You will need:

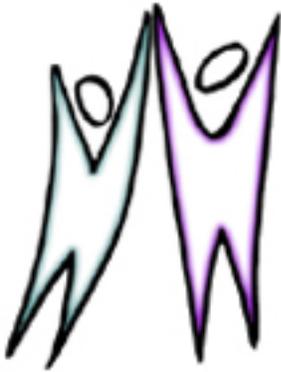
- A stop sign made from posterboard
- One child to stand in the middle of the room and play Jesus
- One child to play a disciple who tries to keep children away from Jesus

Children skip, walk etc. around the circle holding hands with Jesus in the middle. On your cue they begin singing (to the tune of "London Bridges"):

We are going to go see Jesus,
Go see Jesus, go see Jesus,
We are going to go see Jesus.
We're so happy!



As the children circle "Jesus," the child playing the disciple waves his stop sign at them and shouts, "Go away!" After the phrase "We're so happy!" is sung, children run toward the middle and give "Jesus" a group hug. Someone else then takes a turn playing "Jesus" and the disciple, and the game is repeated.



Jesus Sets His Disciples Straight:

**“Let the little children
come unto me!”**

Matthew 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

Objectives - After this lesson the children should:

- Understand that Jesus thinks children are special
- Trust Jesus in order to become one of God’s children
- Participate in activities that communicate a person’s uniqueness to God

“Getting” Started Activity (choose one)

1. LITTLE GUEST VISITOR

Arrange ahead of time with one of your children’s families to bring in a baby to explore during the time that children arrive. Have your guest and parent come 10 minutes early just in case, with a diaper bag full of things babies need (diaper, rattle/toys, bottle/food, diaper rash ointment, spit-up rag, no-tear shampoo, etc.).

Have older brother/sister make an introduction telling some of their favorite things about the special guest. Mom and/or Dad can then bring out items from the diaper bag, one at a time allowing children to guess what they are and what they are used for.

Discussion:

- Share a story about when you were a baby.
- Why do you think babies need older people?
- How can you tell this baby trusts his/her parents?

2. BABY BOOK SHOW-N-TELL

Have children bring their baby books to church with them (you can send a reminder home with parents the week before or call/e-mail some parents during the week). As they arrive have them take turns sharing stories about the pictures inside.

**Discussion:**

- Point out people who have taken care of you through the years.
- Trusting people is an important part of being a kid. Do any of your pictures show that you are trusting others?

Bible Lesson - Mark 10:13-16**“BACK OFF!” ROLE PLAY**

You will need a bag of the following props:

- A Bible
- 2-3 bathrobes
- 1 fake beard made from felt or fuzzy material
- 2-3 baby dolls of various sizes

Assign individual children parts for this role-play. You will need:

- Jesus (he/she wears the fake beard)
- 2-3 Disciples (they wear the bathrobes)
- 2-3 Moms or Dads (carrying baby dolls)

Open your Bible to Mark 10:13-16, and say, “Today you are going to help us learn how important children are to Jesus. When you hear your part in the story, get up and do as it says.”

Take your time as you read, pausing enough to allow children to act out the parts. Encourage “Jesus” to be overly expressive as he, in essence, tells his disciples to “Back off!”

Children may change roles and replay the scene again if interest and time allows.

Discussion:

- Why do you think the disciples treated children this way?
- Do you know people who mistreat children? Who?
- What do we know about Jesus from this story?
- How do you know He loves children – what did he do?

Lesson Reinforcing Activity (choose one)

1. CRAYON RUBBING/SCRATCHING

You will need:

- A piece of white construction paper for each child
- Big crayons with papers removed (extra blacks)
- Various hard and textured surfaces (bricks, tile, etc)
- A pair of scissors for each child

Have children place their papers over the hard and textured surface. Without moving the paper much, have them color heavily using the side of the multiple colorful crayon/s covering the entire paper.

Next, have them color over all of the colors with a black crayon over a smooth surface.

Using the end of a pair of scissors, the have the children scratch in, "Jesus Loves Children!" (the first layers of colored crayon should show through).



2. "GOD LOVES CHILDREN!" BULLETIN BOARD

You will need:

- Various colors of finger paint or tempera with 1/5 Dove dish soap added if finger paint is not available.
- Cut a large heart out of red construction paper and hang it on a bulletin board.
- A picture of Jesus
- Paint shirts
- A sink with soap and water for clean-up.

Have children make handprints on paper using paint. (If you are really daring, you can guide them in making footprints, too).

As the paint dries, they can wash up.

With a permanent marker, write each child's name in the middle of his or her print.

The prints may then be cut out and placed on the large heart on the bulletin board.

On the computer, or free-hand, make a banner saying, "Jesus Loves Children!" Add the picture of Jesus and place this above the heart.





Jesus Sets His Disciples Straight:

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Discussion:

- Share a story about when you were a baby.
- Why do you think babies need older people?
- How can you tell this baby trusts his/her parents?

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**Discussion:**

- Point out people who have taken care of you through the years.
- Trusting people is an important part of being a kid. Do any of your pictures show that you are trusting others?

Bible Lesson - Mark 10:13-16**“LET THE LITTLE CHILDREN COME” MINI-DRAMAS**

Read Mark 10:13-16. Have students list reasons they think the disciples tried to stop the people from bringing their children to Jesus. (They were crying, messy diapers, runny noses, unimportant, etc.)

“What was Jesus’ response?” (He rebuked the disciples and invited all of the children to come to Him. He then cuddled and blessed them.)

Say, “Sometimes bigger children think it is cool to mistreat smaller or younger children. Let’s create a mini-drama that explains how we can be different.” Assign four students to play older siblings and two to four to act as preschool siblings. Have them role-play what would happen when the younger sister or brother constantly asks for help with typical things around the house, or always wants the older sibling to play with him or her.

Split up the actors so that the first team presents what it’s like at home when little children are mistreated. The next team presents just the opposite scene where children are nurtured.

Discussion:

- What is a rebuke? When is a rebuke good, and when is it bad? (A bad rebuke is one that is wrong, like the disciples telling the children to stay

away from Jesus. A good rebuke is one like Jesus gave the disciples, telling them what they did wrong.)

- Have you ever heard or seen someone treated the way the disciples treated the children? Have you ever treated someone the way the disciples treated the children?
- What happens to people when they are ignored or mistreated? How do they feel? What do they think about Jesus if they are ignored or mistreated by people who say they belong to Jesus?
- Are there other groups besides children that some people try to exclude? (The poor, the disabled, people from different backgrounds, people who dress differently, unborn babies, etc.)

Lesson Reinforcing Activity

DISABILITY SIMULATION

Help the children understand what it might be like to be disabled. Assign them to do simple tasks, but with an impairment.

Impairments

Blind or visually impaired

Use a wheelchair

Hearing impaired

Lost use of hands or arms

Possible Tasks

Find an object or person in the room while blindfolded

Travel around an obstacle course

Carry on a conversation with someone while wearing earplugs

Draw a self-portrait by holding a crayon in your mouth or toes

You will need:

- Bandanas (for blindfolds, or to tie hands behind backs)
- A pair of those black, protective sunglasses (for visual impairment)
- Ear plugs or cotton balls (to simulate hearing impairment)
- A wheelchair
- Chairs or other objects for the obstacle course
- Crayons and paper



Worship Resources

SONGS

Wonderfully Made (*Donut Man, Integrity*)

Big House (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. I, Group*)

I Want To Be Like Jesus (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. I, Group*)

John 3:16 (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. I, Group*)

Promises (*Kids on the Rock, Gospel Light*)

God Loves Every Kid (*Kids on the Rock, Gospel Light*)

I See God (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. III, Group*)

Doxology (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. III, Group*)

Cares For You (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. III, Group*)

Jesus Is All the World (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. III, Group*)

We Believe In God (*Sing and Shout Songs - Vol. I, Group*)

For All You Do (*Kids In Worship, Sparrow*)

I Wanna Be Just Like You (*Kids In Worship, Sparrow*)

You Knit Me Together (*Hide 'Em In Your Heart - Vol. 2, Sparrow*)

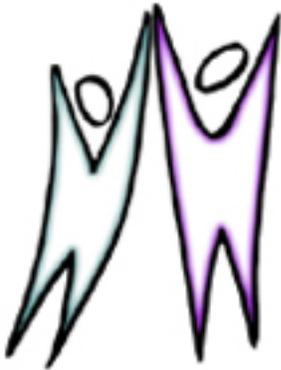
I Will Lie Down and Sleep (*Hide 'Em In Your Heart - Vol. 2, Sparrow*)

OTHER RESOURCES

The Amazing Treasure Bible Story Book (Zondervan)

Story Telling (Karen Henley/Standard)

The Bridge (Majestic Media - (810) 598-1919)



You're Worth More Than You Think!

Objectives:

- Know - To know that all life has value
- Feel - To feel confident that we have value
- Do - To live all of life in light of this value as a response to God

These lesson objectives will be met through a series of three steps: Hook, Look and Took. The “hook” is used to grab the teens’ attention. We “look” into God’s Word to find His truths on the issue at hand. The “took” step applies what we’ve learned – take it home.

Step #1 Hook

This step is designed to grab the teens’ attention and lead them into the lesson. There are three choices for you to use. Choose the one(s) you feel would work best for the teens in your group.

OPTION #1 - THE “PRICE” IS RIGHT

What it is:

- In this opener, the class will see how values are placed on things depending on how they effect us. This value structure is different from God’s. He values all of human life equally.

What to do:

- Bring several items to class and pose this question: “How much is this worth?” Have them discuss the value of each item. Then ask, “Why did you assign that value to it?” “What makes an item valuable or not?” “Are there certain criteria for giving value or not?” “Why is this item worth more or less than that item?” “Does the value change based on location or demand or need?”

Where to go:

- Transition into the idea that we have value as people because of our Maker! (e.g., “What about the value of people? We often look at people and make judgments based on how they look, who they are, etc. What about God? Does He value us differently based on who we are? No! Let’s take some time to look in the Bible and discover the value God gives each of us!”)

OPTION #2 - ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW

What it is:

- In this opener, the teens will see how a piece of art is given value because of its creator, just like we are. We have great value because God created us!

What to do:

- Show pictures of several pieces of expensive art (e.g., “Mona Lisa” by daVinci; sculpture of “David” by Michelangelo, etc.). Have students guess what each piece is and who created it. Share some background on the piece (e.g., what it’s called, who created it, when it was made). Have the class guess the value of each piece. Once they have guessed, tell them the values and spend some time discussing why each piece is so valuable.¹ (For instance, a recently discovered drawing by Michelangelo was sold for over \$8 million.² Another Michelangelo drawing, of the risen Christ, brought the seller a record \$12 million.³)

Where to go:

- Transition e.g., “The value of a painting does not come from the paint used, the size of the painting, or the elegance of its frame. It’s the artist that gives a piece of art its value. It is the same with God – He gives us value. We have value because God made us! Let’s take some time to look in the Bible and discover how valuable we are.”

OPTION #3 – GOD’S ESTIMATE VS. THE WORLD’S

What it is:

- In this opener, the class will discover many of the things to which the world

assigns value and understand they are very different from those things to which God gives value.

What to do:

- Instruct the class to look through a stack of magazines and tear out pictures of what the world says brings value to life. “To what does the world give value?” “In the world’s eyes, what makes one thing more valuable than another?” The class will probably select things such as makeup, hair styles, fancy cars, nice homes, money, good looking friends, having many friends, important jobs, travel, etc.

Where to go:

- Transition e.g., “Much of what the world ascribes value to is very vain in comparison to what God values. God values life. He values you. Let’s look at what God says He values in His Word.”

Step #2 Look

In this part of the lesson we will look at what God’s Word has to say about value and how much He values life. Transition from the introduction to the main lesson by using the “Where to go” section of the “Hooks.”

1. All Life Has Value!

A. God is the giver of life - beginning with conception

- Ps 139:13-14
- Isaiah 49:1-5 “Before I was born the Lord called me... He made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in His quiver...”
- Jeremiah 1:5 “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.”
- God gives life at the point of conception. The unborn baby at 42 days old has a formed and beating heart, arms and legs, a brain with brain waves, mouth, eyes, ears and nose, a skeleton, and can control the movements of muscles and organs. The unborn reflexively responds to stimulus and may be capable of feeling pain - all before the earliest abortions take place.

B. Sometimes we do not value the life God has given.

- Illustrations of lack of value placed on life
 - 1) Abortions
 - 1.5 million babies are aborted each year since 1973 - totaling 43.5 million babies. In other words, we've killed enough babies to populate the entire population of South Africa (43,421,021 people), the 27th largest nation in the world.⁴
 - 2) Holocaust
 - An estimated 6 million Jews and others were killed by the Nazi's during WWII.⁵
 - The actions taken by the Nazi's demonstrate a devaluation of human life.
 - 3) Euthanasia
 - The killing of the elderly, terminally ill, or "non-useful" citizens of a society.
 - Euthanasia is now legal in the Netherlands and Oregon. Currently, a debate rages among Americans about whether someone should have the right to a doctor's help in choosing death.
 - Dr. Kevorkian is known as "Dr. Death." He "helped" dozens of people die, many of whom were not terminally ill, and is currently serving prison time.
 - 4) The terrorists' attacks on the World Trade Center towers and Pentagon showed a worldview that devalues the lives of people who don't follow Islam.

2. Why do you have value?

A. Because God made you - Genesis 1:1, 26-27, 2:7

- "In the beginning God created..." The word "created" comes from a Hebrew word (bara), which means "to create, shape, or form." It is only used with God as the subject. In Genesis 1:1 it is used of creating heaven and earth. Later, in verse 26, it is used in reference to creating individual man.⁶
- "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in our image, in Our image,

according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

- You have value because God made you. Not because you look a certain way, or dress in certain clothes. Not because you have a certain amount of money, or have the "right" friends. You were created by God. Just like a very valuable art piece, you are valuable because of Who created you.

B. Because you are made in God's image - Genesis 1:26-27, 9:6

- The term "image of God" is a key for understanding the divine-human relationship in biblical thought. The exact meaning of the phrase in Genesis 1:26-27 and 9:6 is debated and numerous suggestions have been proposed.
- The Hebrew term for 'image' usually denotes a concrete likeness. To speak of human beings ('Adam') as created in the image of God refers primarily to the bodily form, but also to spiritual attributes.
- The plural pronouns of Genesis 1:27-28 indicate that male and female share equally in the image of God and connect this idea to the twofold commandment ('Be fruitful and multiply . . . and have dominion over'), so that both in nature and in function human beings are understood to reflect their Creator.⁷
- In these verses we see that man was created (formed and shaped) in God's image. What does it mean to be in God's image? The word 'image' comes from a Hebrew word (tselem)⁶ meaning 'likeness.' Humans were created in the 'likeness' of God.
- Value is found in God's having chosen to create you in His likeness. None of the other millions of things God created can say they are created in His likeness, but you can.

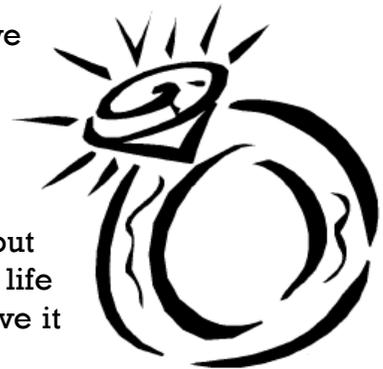
Illustration: Demonstrate the difference between value assigned by people and value given by God

- Diamond analogy - In grading the value of diamonds, there are four C's – cut, clarity, color, and carat. Each "C" determines a value that is placed on a particular diamond and helps set the price of that

stone. God does not have such a rating standard for human beings. We all have value because we've been created by God in His image

C. Because God Gave you life today

- We are only here today because God gave us life to live. We would not be alive today without a God who gives life daily. See Colossians 1:16,17.
- In James 4:13-17, the Bible says that life is a mist and there are really no guarantees about tomorrow. We must realize that God gives life daily and we shouldn't even expect to have it tomorrow except if God wills.
- God is sovereign and alone determines the length of our days. See 1 Samuel 2:6, Psalm 39:4, and Psalm 139:16.



D. Because Christ died for you

- In 2 Corinthians 5:15, the Bible tells us that Christ died for all of us, so that we could live for him.
- In 1 Peter 3:18, God's words says Christ died to restore the relationship between God and man that was broken by sin.
- John 3:16 tells us that God loves us. That's how much he values you and me. He gave his life for us, paying the price of death that we were supposed to pay.
- Possible gospel presentation

Step #3 Took

So what? What does this mean to me? How do I need to be different because of this lesson?

Recognize the value of life around you. There is value in the unborn baby, in the young child, in your classmates, in your parents, in the elderly, and in the terminally ill.

(The “took” section offers three options. You may use one or all of them – it’s up to you based on your group.)

Option #1

God values you. So why are you trying to live someone else's life? You need to be yourself and recognize God has created you with value. Despite whether others choose to value you or not, God values you and His opinion is really the only one that matters. Look at Jeremiah 1:4-8. God didn't like it when Jeremiah said that he was only a child. God wanted Jeremiah just the way he was, and He wants us just the way we are. (See Proverbs 12:9.)

Option #2

God values others, why don't you? God has given all people value and yet too often we choose to judge them, giving them either a too high or too low status. God says to treat all people with value (James 2:1-7, Acts 10:34). In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus said that all the “lowly” people of the earth will be blessed. If the Son of God will lift them up, then we should do it, too. Besides, the least will be greater in heaven (Mark 10:42-45). (See Proverbs 14:31.)

Option #3

Your life is valuable, don't waste it. God created you with a purpose in mind (Ephesians 2:10). What does He want you to do with the life He gave you? Don't let your life become useless (2 Peter 1:5-8). As the Bible says in Ephesians 4:1, we need to live a life worthy of its value – the calling we have received.

How? Colossians 3:17 says we can live a worthy life by doing everything in the name of Christ. Our lives are valuable, so let's reach our ultimate fulfillment: Give your life to God today!

If the story of Christ has been presented in point #2-D, then prompt those who haven't already given their lives to God to do so now (Romans 10:9-11, 2 Corinthians 5:15).

At the end of the lesson, take some time to talk to God and thank Him for the life He has given you. Don't ask Him for anything – just thank Him for all He's given you!

ENDNOTES

1. Check current listings of sales or bids on artwork at christies.com or sothebys.com.
2. See <http://www.cnn.com/2001/WORLD/europe/07/11/michelangelo.auction/index.html> and <http://www.cnn.com/2000/SHOWBIZ/Arts/10/10/uk.michelangelo/index.html>.
3. See <http://www.cnn.com/2000/STYLE/arts/07/05/britain.michelangelo.ap/index.html>
4. See www.census.gov/cgi-bin/ipc/idbrank.pl
5. See <http://www.ushmm.org>
6. *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.
7. Achtemier, Paul J., Th.D., *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc.) 1985.



A Godly Response to the World I Live In

Introduction

As class begins, hand out the student worksheet and direct attention to the box at the top. Encourage class members to list the 10 most important social issues that Christians should take a stand on in today's culture. You may want to have the class break into small-group discussions. Record the most often cited responses on the board. Allow an opportunity for sharing and discussion with the entire class.

Opening Comments

Society is not in short supply of issues that ought to be addressed. This morning we'll be talking about an issue that can leave us either emotionally charged or emotionally empty. How we feel about it can depend to a great extent on what has happened in our personal lives, or in the lives of those very close to us. The issue is abortion.

We are bombarded by so many issues today that it seems we just can't afford to care. As we consider our personal position on this issue, we can begin at several starting points. But the critical question is, what will the source of our final authority be?

Science can help. It can tell us a lot about the beginning and marvels of life. Science supposedly deals with facts, but the facts can be skewed by a person's pre-conceived biases. While science can easily be used to support a pro-life position, some people remain unconvinced by the overwhelming evidence because of their pre-suppositions (i.e. evolution).

Abortion can also be approached statistically. Graphs, tables, charts, and statistics showing the scope and effects of abortion are fairly easy to come by. They show up in the newspapers and magazines. With the Internet we can quickly access all kinds of information from all over the world. The statistics on abortion are also overwhelming, but they have not been enough to change people's minds.

Then there are the testimonials. We can read or listen to stories of both men and women who have been devastated by an abortion in their lives. Or there are the stories of individuals who stopped short of an abortion and rejoice in that decision, even years later. But there are also stories of women who say they are glad they went ahead with an abortion.

All of this points to the need for another source or foundation for our opinions and decisions. While science, statistics, and stories can, and do, lend credence to a given conclusion, the real question is what is the ultimate source of authority.

This is not just a philosophical exercise. Christians must answer that question for every area of life. Our convictions must be founded in Scripture. It must influence our response to every issue, including our position and response to the issue of abortion.

We don't have time to fully cover every facet of this important issue, or look at every Scripture passage that has a bearing on this subject. However, we will begin to build some very solid personal positions on this subject in three areas: Our convictions, our courage, and our compassion. They play a critical role in reaching our final conclusion on the issue of abortion.

1. The Biblical Basis for a Conviction on the Sanctity of Human Life

In the first area, that of conviction, we'll try to answer the question: "What do I believe?" For the sake of time, we will quickly examine only one passage, Psalm 139:13-18. Our goal is to identify the basic truths that this passage presents to us.

(The best way to accomplish this might be to allow class members to form small study groups to wrestle with the passage together. Insights they discover will have greater impact than ones you present in lecture form. You might also encourage them to look at different translations to improve their observation skills.)

As we look at Psalm 139, we can draw out at least four insights that complete this sentence: My life and body . . .

- Are hand-designed by God (vs. 13)
- Are complex in creative detail (vs. 14)

- Find their starting point at conception (vs. 15-16)
- Are part of God's daily thoughts (vs. 17-18)

(Each point may be expanded upon through research in Bible commentaries.)

Of course, this is not the only passage that would indicate to us that human life begins at the point of conception, but it is foundational. Once we accept this as a Biblical principle, we're immediately led to the second issue, that of courage, where we need to answer the question: "Where will I stand?"

2. The Biblical Basis for a Courageous Response to Abortion

Throughout the Bible, as men and women were faced with challenges, they were always encouraged to respond with courage. On your worksheet are the references to four such passages (1 Samuel 17:32, 1 Chronicles 28:20, 1 Corinthians 16:13-14, Philippians 1:20) that come from a variety of circumstances. The common thread is that we are not to succumb to fear as we face the issues that surround us.

Discussion

Assuming that we wanted to face the challenge of abortion in our world, what steps of courage might be involved?

3. The Biblical Basis for a Compassionate Response to Abortion

The final issue we must deal with is that of compassion, and the question: "How will I respond?" This question is not pointed toward addressing the entire issue of abortion. Neither is it directed toward how we should respond to those who are proponents of abortion. The question is: "How should we respond to those who have been impacted by abortion?"

We can be very quick to condemn or convict those who promote abortion as a practice, or even as an option. But how do we respond to those who have been hurt by an abortion? It would be good for us to read some literature that would help us gain some sensitivity to this issue. (Helpful web sites include <http://www.safehavenministries.com> and <http://www.afterabortion.org>.) If abortion has not been a part of our personal lives, we most likely do not have a clear sense of the impact that it can have on an individual.

After an abortion, women often experience a deep sense of loss that can last for a long time. Grief and remorse can be triggered by the anniversary of an abortion, or day that would have been the aborted child's birthday. Individuals often struggle with a sense of separation from God because of choices they've made.

Not only women, but also fathers and grandparents may have similar responses if they are aware of an abortion. What would you say to this man who, wrote to Baptists for Life?

"I was to be a father of twins. My wife decided to have an abortion despite my objections. We had talked many times since and before our marriage that we wanted to have babies, and that we both objected to abortion.

"But now, I find myself feeling very angry and hurt by this woman. She had the abortion last Friday and today she still is in pain. Well so am I. I cannot find any help for hurting 'to be' Dads. How am I supposed to believe anything else my wife tells me?

"Do you know of information to help me? I have a Christian counselor that I meet with tomorrow and I know that she can help me through, but there must be other men that have been hurt by these 'it's my body' women.

"Sorry, if I am spewing here but I'm seriously searching for help."

On your worksheet are four more references that point to our obligation to be people of compassion: 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, Galatians 5:22-23, Colossians 3:12, and 1 John 3:17.

(Alert the class that there are at least two dangers as we approach a topic such as this. The first is insensitivity. We hurt others around us so easily, even though we intend to help. Challenge the class to think carefully about what they should and should not say, what they should and should not do. The second danger is inactivity. We're so accustomed to attending classes and being exposed to Biblical material that we develop an almost unconscious ability to tune out the truth. Therefore, a single step of action will be better than none. Challenge your class to think about what the next step should be for them.)

Life Matters Worldwide has many valuable resources on its web site [lifemattersww.org] that would help you to add practical steps to each point of the lesson.



A Godly Response to the World I Live In

- Top 10 Issues:**
- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 5. |
| 5. | 10. |

The topic we're addressing today is _____.

1. _____ - What do I believe?

Our position on this issue is assisted by _____, _____,
and _____ - but it must be founded on _____.

A key passage: Psalm 139:13-18. What key truths can we find in this section?

2. _____ - Where will I stand?

- 1 Samuel 17:32
- 1 Chronicles 28:20
- 1 Corinthians 16:13-14
- Philippians 1:20

3. _____ - How will I respond?

- 2 Corinthians 1:3
- Galatians 5:22-23
- Colossians 3:12
- 1 John 3:17