

BIBLE STUDY: Life is Precious

by Heather Melcher

Supplies Needed:

- Bibles
- White board and dry erase pen(s), blackboard and chalk, or large piece of paper like newsprint and markers
- “Participant Copy” handout for each person and pens or pencils
- an egg (either hard boiled to avoid a mess or if possible have an egg with a live chick in it and a candling light so that participants can see the chick inside)

Notes to leader are indented. Questions and parts the leader will read aloud are in bold.

Bible Study

Let’s open with prayer: “Dear Heavenly Father, let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to You and help us to grow in faith, knowledge and trust in You. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

What does the word “sanctity” mean?

Sanctity = holiness or sacredness. If something is holy or sacred it is also precious and treasured, not something to just be thrown away.

Today we will be investigating what the Bible says about the sanctity of life.

Read Genesis 2:7-8, 15-23.

How is the Bible’s account of creation different from the theory of evolution?

Give participants time to share their ideas. Some points you might want to explain are:

The theory of evolution suggests that humans evolved from animals and that animals evolved from a one-celled creature that somehow came into existence millions of years ago. The Bible teaches us that God created a wide variety of animals and also created human beings.

We do not know exactly how long ago the world was created, but Abraham lived about 4000 years ago and, based on the genealogy of Jesus found in Luke 3, we know that there were about 20 generations between Adam and Abraham.

Although our bodies fit with the classification of mammals, humans are not just another kind of animal and we are not descended from animals.

How does a view of either evolution or creation affect our ideas about the sanctity of life?

If we see ourselves as just random groups of cells, we may not value life as highly as if we see people as God’s creations. If we were created by an all-powerful God, who also loved us so much that He sent His only Son to die for our sins, then life is very precious.

Read Ephesians 2:4-10.

What do these Bible verses tell us about the value of a human life?

God values us and loves each of us.

Read Exodus 20:13.

What does this Bible verse say about our choosing to end a life, either our own or someone else’s?

You shall not murder.

When we talk about sanctity of life, abortion is one of the main issues that come up. What are some of the reasons people use to argue for or against abortion?

On a white board, blackboard, or large piece of paper, make two columns and have the group help make a list

of reasons people give for either supporting or opposing the legalization of abortion.

One argument “pro-choice” people sometimes make is that a fetus is just a clump of cells and not really a person yet.

Bring out the egg and show it to the group. If it is just a hard-boiled egg, ask them to pretend that there is a chick inside. If you were able to get an egg with a live chick inside, hold the egg up to a light so everyone can see the chick inside.

If a human fetus is just a clump of cells, then logically, this unborn chick is also just a clump of cells.

Gently lay the egg on the floor.

And if the chick inside is just a clump of cells, there would not be anything wrong with me stepping on this egg and terminating the chick’s life since it couldn’t survive on its own outside the egg yet.

Raise one leg and hold foot over egg as if you were about to step on it.

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

Pick up egg and hold it lovingly while participants share their answers.

Let’s read what the Bible says about human babies in the womb.

Read Jeremiah 1:5 and Psalm 139:16.

Based on the Bible, is a fetus a person whose right to life should be protected, or just a group of cells?

A fetus is a human being and deserves to be protected.

Some “pro-choice” people admit that a fetus is not just a clump of cells, but they argue that a woman’s right to control what happens to her own body should come before the rights of the fetus.

Read Psalm 82:3 and Proverbs 6:16-17.

Based on the Bible, do you think it is right to kill an unborn child, even if it is your own?

Some people suggest that it is better for a child to be aborted than to be born to a mother who does not want him or her. What do you think?

Does our value come from other people loving us or from God loving us?

We are so precious to God that Jesus chose to die for us. Even if you were the only person in the world, Jesus still would have died to save you from your sins. No matter how many or how few people in this world care about a person, each person is precious because God loves him or her.

Some people want to be able to abort a baby if tests show that it will be born with birth defects or genetic conditions such as Down’s Syndrome. Do you think we should be able to choose which lives are worth living?

Allow the group a few minutes to discuss, pointing out that it is not up to us to decide which lives have value. All life has value to God.

This idea that we can choose which lives are worth living comes up with suicide, assisted suicide and euthanasia too.

Suicide is when a person chooses to kill himself or herself.

Assisted suicide is when someone helps another person to kill himself or herself, usually when that person is very ill or injured.

Euthanasia is when a person kills someone who is too ill or injured to be able to make choices for himself or herself.

Some people feel death is better than going through struggles they or someone they love are encountering in life. A person may be depressed, have financial problems, be very ill, be in trouble with the law, etc. and feel that death would be better than having to cope with their troubles. The problem with that logic is that death is not the end. Human beings have eternal souls. When our bodies die, our

souls go on to spend eternity either in heaven or hell.

Read Mark 16:16.

What happens to the eternal souls of people who are aborted, who commit suicide, or who are euthanized before they hear about Jesus or stop rejecting Jesus?

If a person is aborted, commits suicide, or is euthanized before he or she comes to believe in Jesus, that person loses his or her chance to spend eternity in heaven and is stuck forever in hell. Note, though, that it may be possible for an unborn child to have faith since John the Baptist leapt for joy in his mother's womb when Mary was pregnant with Jesus and visited Elizabeth, John's mother. Even before John the Baptist and Jesus were born, John already had faith in Jesus. We cannot say that all aborted or miscarried babies lose out on heaven but we also do not want to take away their opportunity to live and get to know Jesus through the Word and Sacraments.

So, if God wants us to stay alive until He decides it is our time to die, how are we to handle all of the struggles of life?

Read Romans 5:1-5.

What does the Bible say about suffering?

God allows it sometimes because it helps us to grow and mature.

Recommended Resources

Lutherans for Life offers a wide variety of resources through their website at www.lutheransforlife.org. Some of those resources are also available from the Concordia Publishing House website at www.cph.org.

Concordia Publishing House offers a good selection of resources for in-depth study and discussion of sanctity of life topics including:

- *Abortion in Perspective: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod as Prepared by its Social Concerns Committee* May 1984.
- *What About Abortion* by A.L. Barry
- *What Child Is This? Marriage Family and Human Cloning: A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.* April 2002.
- **Christian Faith and Human Beginnings: Christian Care and Pre-Implantation Human Life:** A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. September 2005.
- *In the Beginning: A Collection of Essays and Bible Studies on the Sanctity of Early Human Life.* LCMS World Relief and Human Care, Sanctity of Life Committee.
- *Christian Care at Life's End:* A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. February 1993.

thESource is published on the Web by LCMS Office of National Mission—Youth Ministry. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 1-800-248-1930; www.youthesource.com. Editor: Sherrah Holobaugh Behrens. VOL. 9 NO. 11. November 2012.

www.youthESource.com

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