

Tennessee Right to Life
SANCTITY OF LIFE CURRICULUM
GRADE 3 - WEEK 2
OUR NEED FOR GOD AT EVERY STAGE OF LIFE

PERSPECTIVE FOR THE TEACHER

Last week you took a major step in establishing a culture of life in our society; you taught a group of third graders that from the moment a person's life begins, they are unique and precious. Through the lesson, you helped them to understand that life is a continuum. This will go a long way in giving them a pro-life mindset based on God's word. When they hear the words "fetus" or "embryo", they will not think of a mass of cells like the pro-choice movement would like them to, but as a unique human being in a certain stage of life.

This week you will help the students to see that at each age there are limitations, but that God has used and continues to use these limitations to bring people to Himself. You are trying to build a true respect for LIFE at all stages—born and unborn. With this lesson you are also going to teach the students that every human being is special and worthy of respect regardless of what they can or cannot do. Genesis 1:27 says that God made us in His own image--this is what gives us value. We are special NOT because of **what** we can do but simply because of who we ARE. Therefore, you will strive in this lesson to help the students understand that every person is worthy of respect and protection whether or not they can walk, see, sit up, or even think clearly. These limitations do not reduce their "image of God" as a matter of fact sometimes they enhance it! Some people with "disabilities" are left "incapacitated" by accident or illness and still others are affected by old age, but these "conditions" do not make them any less loved by God or unworthy of respect. We are to love one another solely because we have been created in the image of a loving God. Without explicitly saying so, you are helping these children to begin to understand that death (abortion, euthanasia, infanticide) is never God's solution to difficult situations nor should it be ours.

SCRIPTURE:

II Corinthians 12:9-10

Memory verse: *"Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward."*

Psalm 127:3 (NASB)

(The following scriptures are written as simplified stories to read to the class. Scripture references are for teacher's use.)

Exodus 1:22 and 2:1-10	<i>Moses in the river</i>
Matthew 2:13-15	<i>Joseph taking Jesus and Mary to Egypt</i>
Luke 1:39-45	<i>Mary helps Elizabeth</i>
Mark 2:1-5	<i>Paralytic lowered through roof to see Jesus</i>
Exodus 17:8-12	<i>Arms of Moses held up during battle</i>

LESSON GOALS:

- To explore the limitations of the various stages of Life
- To show how people in the various stages/ conditions of Life need and receive help
- To reveal how God used people to help others in various stages of Life
- To explain how we can become better persons and love God more fully when we help others

THIS LESSON SHOULD HELP THE STUDENTS:

- To realize that at all stages and conditions of LIFE a person is made in the image of God and worthy of respect.
- To celebrate that they know people in the various stages of LIFE.
- To discover some limitations of each stage of LIFE.
- To understand how God uses our limitations and the limitations of others to reveal Himself to us.
- To recognize ways to help those in need, and treat people at all stages with respect, no matter what limitations they may have.

VISUALS / SPECIAL PREPARATIONS:

- *Continuum of Life* banner displayed in classroom
- *Horton Hears a Who* Book
- Extra index cards (*In case all stages of life aren't covered by the students from their take-home assignment, you should be prepared with your own index cards with names of people in different stages of life to use for today's class activity.*)

TAKE HOME MATERIALS

- *We Need Each Other* worksheet based on *Horton Hears a Who*

TEACHING THE LESSON**A. Introduction****1. Opening Prayer**

(Have the Continuum of Life prominently displayed at the front of the room.)

Dear Heavenly Father, we worship You and we thank You for all the blessings You have given us. We especially thank You for the gift of LIFE and that we have been made in Your image. Help us to learn to love others as You do ALWAYS, no matter how old or how young they are. No matter what they can or cannot do. Please help us to glorify You during our class time together. Amen.

2. Review

(Go over the assignment from last week. Briefly let the children share with the class the things their parents remembered about them before they were born. Help them to understand through their stories that since the beginning of their lives, inside their mothers, they have always been the same person-- they have just grown. Spend just a minute reviewing the continuum of life poster as they tell their stories.)

B. Class Discussion

1. Our weaknesses

Last week we talked about the different ways that the gift of life was special to people in each of the different stages. We saw how God used people in each of these different stages— Jesus as a newborn baby, Abraham and Sarah as older people, David as a teenager, and even Jesus and John the Baptist while they were still in their mothers' womb.

Today we are going to talk about each stage of life and the things that people **cannot** do at these different ages.

God sometimes limits what we can do and makes us weak so that He can be revealed to us (many times through the helpful acts of others). (*Read II Corinthians 12:9-10*) Many times it may not be until someone is weak or sick before they know just how much they need God. And sometimes when someone receives help from others we can see how God is working. There are many times in our lives when we are weak and need the help of others. God used people in the Bible to show how we need the help of others at various times throughout life.

2. Bible Stories

(As you read these stories, let the children tell you or let them stand at the stage of life on the Continuum banner in which the person was who needed help.)

- **Moses rescued from the river**--When Moses was born there was an evil king in Egypt and he didn't want there to be too many Israelites. The king gave an order that all baby boys should die! Moses was just tiny so he couldn't help himself, but his mother put him in a basket and put him in the river. His sister followed the basket until the king's daughter found it and took Moses out and raised him as her own son. *In which stage of life was Moses when he needed help from his mother, sister and the king's daughter? (Infant)*
- **Jesus cures the paralytic**--Many people wanted to meet Jesus. They had heard of the great things He had done, so they wanted to see Him. Once there was a man who was paralyzed who wanted to see Jesus, but Jesus was teaching in a very crowded house and this man couldn't get in. He couldn't see Jesus without some help. His friends decided to make a hole in the roof of the house and lower him into the crowded house! When Jesus saw the faith of this man and his friends, he healed him. Then the man could walk. *In which stage of life was this man when he needed help from his friends? (Adult)*
- **Mary and Jesus with Elizabeth and John the Baptist**--While Mary was pregnant with Jesus, she went to see her cousin Elizabeth. She wanted to help Elizabeth because she was also pregnant with her baby (John the Baptist). By helping to take care of Elizabeth, Mary was also taking care of the baby inside of her. The Bible says that when Mary visited Elizabeth that Elizabeth's baby leaped in her womb. John the Baptist could already feel that Jesus was near even though neither of them was yet born. *In which stage of life was John the Baptist when he was helped by Mary and Jesus? (Fetus)*
- **Joseph saves Jesus from Herod**--When Jesus was still a little baby, King Herod heard that a king had been born. He was very jealous and afraid that this newborn king would take his power, so he declared that all the baby boys in Bethlehem be killed. Remember, Jesus was just a baby, so he couldn't run by himself. However, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream to warn him and to tell him to run to Egypt. Joseph, Mary and Jesus escaped Herod and stayed in Egypt until the wicked king had died. *In which stage of life was Jesus when He was helped by Joseph? (Newborn)*
- **Moses' hands held up during battle**--After the Israelites were freed from Egypt,

God told Moses to lead the people through the dessert into the Promised Land. While they were traveling, an army attacked them. Moses told Joshua to lead the Israelite men into battle the next day while he prayed. Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of a hill and Moses lifted his hands and his staff in the air and prayed. While his hands were up, the Israelites were winning the battle, but when he got tired and put them down, the enemy was winning. Moses needed help, so Aaron and Hur held his arms up, one on each side until the battle was over and the Israelites had won! *In which stage of life was Moses when Aaron and Hur helped him? (Senior Citizen)*

We've talked about people in the various stages of life from the Bible. Now let's talk about some of the people you know. How many of you brought the cards with names of people in the different stages of life? *(Call on various students to explain something that one of their persons can't do. Also ask them how they can help this person. For example: "Who brought a card with someone who is in the toddler stage?" Tell me what are some of the things that this toddler cannot do. Maybe, can't tie shoes, cook their own food, etc. And how can you help them? Hopefully you will get cards of people in all phases on the continuum. If not, fill them in with the ones that you brought and let the children help you come up with the list of things that can't be done in that phase. If time and space allow, you might have the students tape their index cards under the correct stage of life on the Continuum of Life.)*

As you can see by your examples, it is not what people can do that makes us love them. It is the same with God. He does not love us because we can run fast or because we are smart. No, He loves us because we belong to Him—He created us in His image. Do any of you know someone who cannot walk, or maybe someone who cannot see, or maybe someone who cannot even get up out of their bed, or maybe someone who is so poor that they don't even have a bed? God loves these people just as He loves you because they too are made in His image. We are to love God by loving and caring for people—all people. God showed us that through the stories that we heard today. When Moses was a baby, his mother loved him and God loved him, not because of anything he could do, because we all know that little babies can hardly do anything for themselves. God loved Moses because he was a person made in His image. Moses' mother loved Him and found a way to save his life. The same is true with the other stories. The paralyzed man could not do things for himself, but God and his friends still loved him and helped him. This is how we are to be. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves no matter what they can or can not do. Every person is worthy of our respect because he or she is made in the image of God. By treating all people with love and respect, we show God our love for Him.

How many of you have ever read *Horton Hears a Who*? Let's read a part of it now. *(At the minimum, read from the beginning to the first "a person's a person no matter how small." Read the entire book if time allows—it is a great story about protecting someone even when they are very small.)* Let's think for a moment about that phrase "a person's a person no matter how small. *(Point to a child on the Continuum.)* Do you think this person's a person no matter how small? *(Repeat this while pointing to the newborn and then the unborn stages.)* All people whether they are big or little, young or old should be treated with love, kindness and respect. If someone is in a wheelchair or can't see or hear, they should also be treated with love, kindness and respect. That is what God wants. *(If you read the entire book, you can discuss how Horton cared for the small Who, even though many of his neighbors made fun of him. He did the right thing.)*

C. Closing

1. Summary

Let's take a few minutes to think about what we learned today.

- We learned about what each of us has done during our different phases of life.
- We talked about how at every stage of life people need help.
- We talked about how God loves people when they are weak or even sick.
- We talked about people we know and some of the things they need help doing.
- We learned that a person's a person no matter how small.

2. Take home assignment

For next week there's a worksheet that I want you to do with your parents. Dr. Seuss pointed out that a person's a person no matter how small. I want you to think of people in different stages of life throughout the week and fill in the blanks on this sheet with other descriptions that you see.

For example, a person's a person no matter how poor or a person's a person no matter how clumsy. Once we understand this teaching, we will start to see all people as God does, as gifts. We will learn that all people are made in the image of God and that He expects us to treat them as such-- even if they are not yet born or if they are very old. Even if they can't walk or even if they are sick. God wants us to help and serve others. When people see us serving and helping others, God is glorified.

3. Prayer

Let's end our class with prayer. I will start us out and then each of you can pray for those people you wrote on your cards, or others you know who need help, because the best thing we can do for anyone is to pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, thank You for our class time today. Thank You for making all of us in Your Image. Help us to love others and help others whether they are young or old. Help us to always glorify You by the way we treat others. *(Let children add their prayers.)* Amen.

Remember to pass out the Take Home Packets.