

Tennessee Right to Life
SANCTITY OF LIFE CURRICULUM
Grade 6 - Week 1

PRESERVING LIFE: GOD’S EXAMPLE THROUGH ESTHER

PERSPECTIVE FOR THE TEACHER

The central theme for the middle school Sanctity of Life Curriculum is “Choosing Life.” The goal is to increase discernment concerning the facts and issues surrounding the question of abortion. The Sixth Grade students are approaching maturity in many areas of their lives. Their understanding of life issues is being solidified during these brief years before they begin high school. Our goal is to arm them with the truth, so that they will not be deceived when they face circumstances that challenge their Christian values.

It is crucial that we transmit God’s truth to them, and do all we can to instill the desire to be obedient to that truth. You will focus on helping them understand that God’s standard is Life in all circumstances. You will also cover the physical development of human life, and stress that we, as God’s children, can and must protect unborn life in our words, prayers, and actions.

In Grade 5, the students learned that abortion is the taking of a child’s life before his birth. This year, you will help your students understand how many lives are being lost to abortion, and you will also help them put a “face” on all those numbers through the use of the beautiful fetal models. They will learn that God calls His people to preserve life. Through the story of Esther, they will learn about some specific tools God gives us for that purpose. You will help them to know that they can and should speak for those who cannot speak for themselves, and that they have a powerful role to play, even at their young age, through their prayers in the spiritual battle to end abortion. You will then ask them to make a commitment to pray for an end to abortion. The Take Home Assignment will ask their parents to drive them by the abortion facility in your town, in order to see abortion’s brick-and-mortar reality.

SCRIPTURE:

Exodus 20:13

Psalms 139:13-15

Proverbs 24: 11-12

Esther 3: 8-15, 4:14-17

Proverbs 6:16-19

Memory Verse: *“The people who know their God will display strength and take action!”*
 Daniel 11:32b (NASB)

LESSON GOALS:

- To review prenatal development
- To show God’s desire to preserve life using the Bible story of Esther
- To introduce students to abortion statistics
- To explain that choosing life may sometimes be difficult, but God’s standard is always life and not death

THIS LESSON SHOULD HELP THE STUDENT:

- Understand that God calls us to preserve life.
- Realize that statistics are not just numbers, but represent real lives.
- See that prayer and fasting are basic to fighting abortion.

VISUALS / SPECIAL PREPARATIONS:

- Fetal Models, covered with a cloth when students arrive (see Appendix A)
- American War Casualties/War on the Unborn Flyer
- The memory verse written on the board

TAKE HOME MATERIALS:

- *Preserving Life/God's Example* worksheet
 - *All About You* brochure
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TEACHING THE LESSON

A. Introduction**1. Opening Prayer**

(Welcome students and begin with a prayer of thanksgiving for the life God has given us and for the needs He has met in our lives.)

2. Review**The Sanctity of Human Life**

We often say that life is sacred, but what does that really mean? *(After allowing them time to express their thoughts briefly, make sure the following points are covered.)*

- God created everything in Heaven and on Earth, but He made man in a very special way. The Bible tells us that God created us “in His image.”
- Being made in His image means that we can know, love and serve Him in ways that nothing else in creation can.
- The Bible tells us that each life is precious to God because it is made in His image.
- God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to save us when we sinned.

B. Discussion**1. The Tragedy of Abortion**

When Cain killed Abel, it was the first murder. This sin grieved God and He punished Cain. Murder is a sin which still happens, and it still grieves God, when anyone takes a precious human life. You may have heard the word, abortion. Abortion is the intentional killing of a baby before he has a chance to be born; this too is murder. The loss of even one life through abortion is a tragedy, but most people don't realize just how many lives are lost each year. *(Show the American War Casualties poster deaths.)*

To give you some idea of those numbers, I'd like to share this poster. It compares the number of soldiers killed in ALL our nation's wars with the number of children killed through abortion since 1973, when abortion was legalized. These numbers tend to be overwhelming and it is difficult for us to relate to them. The number of children killed in our country every year is about 1.2 million. This is about 3,300 every single day. This is more than the number of people killed by the terrorists on September 11, 2001 in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania combined. The tragedy of that day is obvious, yet the tragedy of abortion in our country goes almost unnoticed.

In Tennessee an average of forty-three unborn babies die each day from abortion. (Source: Statistical Services, Health Statistics and Research, 2000) If forty-three sixth graders died everyday in Tennessee, we would hear about it. As a matter of fact, when even one child is abused or killed or neglected, it is major news; we see it on the TV, hear it on the radio, read it in the newspaper, because it is a tragedy. But have you ever heard anything about the forty-three unborn babies who die everyday in Tennessee? This too is a great tragedy. Just because we do not hear about it on the news, doesn't mean that these forty-three people didn't exist; that they didn't matter. They were made in the image of God; He had a plan for their lives, too.

Whether we are talking about forty-three unborn babies or a million, we must be careful to never forget the significance of just one baby's life. To help us keep that truth clear, we are going to spend some time looking at the development of just one baby.

(Use Appendix A to explain and discuss prenatal development using the Fetal Models, uncovering each one as that stage is described. Pass the models around, allowing the students to observe the wondrous details of a developing baby.)

Another way to consider these numbers is to realize that one out of every four babies is killed through abortion. This is the same as if one-fourth of us in this room had never been born. **Please stand up and count off by 4's. If you are a '4', please sit down. You are dead. You were alive, but we never knew you. If you are standing, look around at those you never knew: perhaps a best friend, a brother, the most polite person you ever knew, a poet, the fastest runner, a person who brings humor into our lives, someone's future mom. This is what abortion does to us and our country EVERY MOMENT OF EVERY DAY.**

2. God's View of Abortion

In Scripture we see how God views murder. In Exodus 20:13, He clearly commands, "Thou shalt not kill." Then in Proverbs 6:16-19, we read that God hates the shedding of innocent blood. These verses tell us that killing is wrong and a sin. In Psalm 139:13-15, we see how precious even unborn lives are to God. God also tell us what we should do. Now that we know how God views abortion, what should we do? *(Read Proverbs 24:11-12.)* So, it's not enough for us to be pro-life; we have to do something. In the Book of Esther, God gives us a good example of what we can do to preserve life.

C. Class Activity

1. The Story of Esther

The story of Esther inspires us with the example of how God used one person's brave obedience to save lives. We see how God's standard is the protection of life. Esther spoke for those who could not speak for themselves, and just as God used her to protect the lives of the Jews 2500 years ago, He can use us to protect the lives of unborn babies today.

So let's review the story:

Esther was an ordinary girl. She was selected to enter the king's court and became his queen. The king was Ahasuerus, King of Persia. Haman, the king's advisor requested that the Jews in the kingdom be killed, as they would not bow down and worship the king, or honor the king's servant, Haman. Instead, they would only bow down and worship Yahweh, their one true God. The king agreed with Haman's plan. Queen Esther was also a Jew; but this fact was unknown to the king and Haman.

Esther's uncle, Mordecai, informed her of the evil plot. She was in a special place to

request that the lives of her people be saved, and was challenged by her uncle to take a risk on behalf of her people, for approaching the king without being summoned meant possible death for the one who so boldly confronted the king.

Esther was aware not only of the danger of approaching the king without being called, but also that God was the only one Who could save the Jewish people. Thus, she appealed to God for help, and asked that all the Jews pray and fast, before she went to the King. God answered their prayers and gave Esther a plan for how to approach the King. She was to invite the king and Haman to a banquet. She knew her people were praying and fasting for her, and God gave her the courage to take action. She prepared the banquet, and when the king came to her, she spoke the truth about Haman's evil plan. The king repented of his plan, and punished Haman. By God's grace and their faithful prayer and fasting, the Jews were saved.

2. Our Role

Like Esther, we have a role to fulfill on behalf of a group of people who cannot speak or act for themselves. In our case it is unborn babies. Using Esther's example, what are some basic things we can do? (*List their responses on the board; be sure to include the following:*)

- Always remember how precious each life is to God
- Pray for those who are in danger of abortion
- Pray for those who are trying stop abortion

Are we brave like Esther, willing to take action as led by God? In Daniel 11, we are reminded: *"The people who know their God will display strength and take action!"* This is our memory verse for this week. Let's read it together.

Our action is to begin by faithfully praying every day for an end to abortion.

D. Closing

1. Summary

Let's take a minute to remember everything we learned today:

- We learned that abortion has taken more lives than all the wars America has ever fought.
- In the story of Esther, we saw how God used an ordinary person to carry out His will to save lives.
- We learned that God hears the prayers of His people.

2. Closing Prayer

Remember to pass out the Take Home Packet.