

# Teacher Overview – Abortion

## Abortion & Prolife

It is difficult to talk about abortion in Canada because it is a moral issue with two strongly opposing views. But it must be talked about because in the centre of the debate are the life of a child and the well-being of a pregnant woman. After years of legalized abortion, countless people have been hurt because of it – either directly or indirectly. This applies within our churches as well. As a result, this lesson must be delivered with sensitivity, realizing that students in the room may be a whole lot closer to this issue than we may expect.

There is no doubt that abortion is evil. It usually involves the purposeful destruction of human life for the sake of personal convenience. All human life is special in God's eyes. He made humans separate from the rest of creation and also warned us to respect human life "for in the image of God has God made man." (Gen 9: 6) Abortion is a choice to destroy a human that God miraculously created in the womb. The legality or ease of a choice does not make it right or justifiable. God's command against murder applies to everyone, including the unborn who are the most vulnerable.

In Canada, close to 100,000 unborn children are aborted every year. Looking globally, an estimated 126,000 unborn children die every day because of abortion. It is hard to think about how huge those numbers are. Compare them to the size of some cities in your area (for the Canadian figure) or countries in the world (for the international number).

There are no laws that limit abortion in Canada. Abortions are allowed until the child is outside of his or her mother. This is a result of the Supreme Court of Canada striking down the already weak abortion law in 1988 with the case involving Canada's notorious abortionist Dr. Henry Morgentaler. The absence of abortion laws means that they could be performed for any reason, including choosing the sex or physical traits of a child. It also means that school-aged girls can have abortions without their parents ever knowing about it.

## But What Can Be Done?

There are three general approaches that the pro-life community has used to respond to abortion:

### Pastoral Approach

This involves combating abortion by reaching out to the women who are considering an abortion and offering them the support they need to carry their baby to term. Pregnancy care centres are located in communities across the country and work to bring a positive pro-life message to women. There are also toll-free phone lines and websites directed towards pregnant women. The pastoral approach emphasizes compassion and assistance. Some can provide information on adoption, counselling, or even ultrasounds.

### Prophetic Approach

This involves speaking to our nation to make abortion unthinkable. Prophets in the Old Testament spoke out against evil and injustice to awaken the people and urge them to repentance. In our age, some pro-life groups are taking a similar approach by showing our world what abortion really is. This can include showing graphic pictures of abortion at university campuses (known as GAP displays), erecting billboards which draw awareness to the health effects of abortion on women, and having public debates about abortion.

### Political Approach

Abortion is prevalent partly because the law allows it to happen. Some pro-lifers try to limit abortion by promoting laws which make it more difficult to have an abortion. For example, a law could require a woman to be told about the potential health effects of having an abortion including a higher risk of suicide, breast cancer, and complications with future pregnancies. In the United States these laws have resulted in a decrease in the number of abortions.

### What can Christians do?

In our daily lives we can demonstrate a pastoral, prophetic, and political approach. We can reach out to help women who may be considering an abortion, we can speak to our friends who may be OK with abortion, and we can use our democratic freedom to bring a pro-life message to our government. Doing this requires that we are comfortable with giving a pro-life message. That is why this lesson is so important. It provides simple tools that students can use in their daily lives to speak up for the unborn.