

Use “The Scene” to introduce “The Team, the Whole Team, and Nothing but the Team” the Young Teen Sunday school lesson for March 5, 2017. The lesson is found on page 5 of *Young Teen Teacher*.



In June of last year, the Supreme Court struck down a Texas law requiring doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at local hospitals. According to a Reuters/Ipsos poll taken at about the same time, out of nearly 7,000 U.S. adults, 47 percent said abortion should be legal and 42 percent said it should be illegal.

Some hospitals (particularly those operated by Catholic organizations) are coming under fire for their stated policies that prohibit doctors from performing abortions. In other situations, the religious rights of individual doctors working in public hospitals are coming under attack as court cases are decided about whether their willingness to perform abortions can be part of the criteria for their employment.

Meanwhile, scientists and researchers around the world are currently debating and questioning the generally agreed standard (which is law in some countries) that states that research and experimentation on human embryos may only take place up until 14 days after origination. This particular time was agreed on because researchers acknowledged this is the point at which the central nervous system appears and it's the time at which an embryo can no longer split into twins.

The idea here, as a recent National Public Radio report stated, was that since the embryo can no longer split into two (or more), this is the point at which an embryo becomes a “unique individual” (Rob Stein, *Morning Edition*, March 2, 2017).

“A unique individual *what?*” a person might well ask. Apparently, half the country would answer that question one way, while the other half would perhaps say something else.

The value of human life, every human life, will continue to come into question in the court cases coming in future years. Some people are placing more weight and importance on the rights of those who are fully grown humans, walking about, making choices in their lives. But questions remain. Whose rights are more important? Which life matters?

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above article to read. Then discuss it in this way:

What thoughts or impressions come to your mind as you read this article?

Some people who support abortion argue that women should have easy access to abortions as part of their reproductive rights. They argue that women have the right to do what they want with their own bodies. If you could talk to people who hold these beliefs, what questions would you want to ask them?

It's clear in the Bible that God loves every person. No one is more important to him than anyone else. How do you see this truth lived out in your life?

Most of the time, we deal with self-importance in more trivial matters of our lives than the question of abortion rights. But how we value people in small matters can lead to bigger decisions. What happens when one person considers himself more important than others? Let's look at this today.