



“Right from the Beginning” video

BIBLE STUDY/LEADER'S GUIDE

Watch the video.

Ask the youth their first impression.

Watch it again and encourage them to consider the message the video communicates.

1. When does life begin?

(Listen for answers from the youth. Don't necessarily correct them at this time.)

2. Who decides when life ends?

(Again, listen to their answers. Don't necessarily correct them)

3. Read Ps. 139:13–17. When does life begin according to this passage?

Life begins at conception. God gives this life. He knows everything that will happen. He holds all life in His hands. Our society tries to avoid words that declare this truth. Most people prefer to call babies fetuses or tissue. This removes their humanity and their viability of life from our minds. If we learn to understand that life begins at conception, we learn to speak of it accurately. Babies exist in the womb. They are alive. They are gifts from God. Every one.

4. Read Ps. 51: 3–5. What is our condition at the beginning of life?

We are born sinful. Remind them of original sin. We inherit sin from our parents. There is never a moment that we aren't guilty of sin.

5. Read Rom. 6:23. Why do we say that God says life is good if we are totally sinful?

Through the death and resurrection, God has pronounced all life good. Though our sins earn death, God sent Jesus to die as payment for our sins. Now, God gives to us life, and promises us life in His love. Eternal life is not just a future hope. Eternal life means that God defines our lives now as participation in eternity. We are in Christ now. His resurrection means that life now is a foretaste of the life to come. God's gift of salvation in Christ sanctifies all of life. Because Jesus died for all, we see all as having worth — as God sees them.

6. Read John 9:1–7. What are the effects of sin?

People are not born perfect. The consequence of the presence of sin in our world is that we live in a fallen world. It isn't perfect, and neither are we. This is true spiritually (original sin) and also true physically. Most people are born with some form of physical imperfection (glasses, braces, sickness, etc.). Some people are born with more obvious and serious disabilities.

7. Is this the result of the individual's sin?

No. We do not receive ailments or disabilities as punishment for our individual sins. These are all the result of sin in our world. God saves us through His Son Jesus. Jesus died in order to restore us to the way we were created — perfect. When we are raised on the last day, we will be given perfect bodies to live forever with God. Until then, we live in broken bodies that bear the result of sin.

8. Life is a gift from God. Should we judge the quality of this gift of life based on appearance?

No. God gives the gift of life. His gifts are always good — even if we misuse them. We receive that gift in ourselves

and in others. We don't have the right to judge the gift. God alone gets to decide on life. All life is a gift from Him, including lives that we may perceive as being different from ours.

9. Can life be the result of a sinful act?

Yes. Many children are born as the result of sin. But that doesn't mean the child is less important than any other child. God gives life. Even if that is a result of a sinful decision or act. God blesses us even in our sin. Christ was killed through the sinful action of men, and yet God worked salvation for the whole world through His death and resurrection. God can and does work His good in and through any situation, including sinful ones.

10. Read 1 John 2:1–2. How does Jesus see every one?

Jesus loves everyone. He sees everyone as gifts and precious. He loves everyone enough to die for them. He gave up His life for all people. We know that because He died for all. Not just those who are “worthy.” He died for all.

11. Read Rom. 6:3–4. How does God live in our hearts?

God lives in our hearts through Baptism. In Baptism, He claims us as His own. We belong to Jesus through His gift of Baptism and His love.

12. Read 1 Cor. 10:16–17. How does God make us His own?

God makes us His own through Baptism and the Lord's Supper. His very body and blood given and shed for the forgiveness of our sins makes us part of His body, the Church. The Sacraments are given to us in order to give and strengthen our faith.

13. Read 1 John 3:1. How do you know that God loves you?

The death and resurrection of Jesus is God's love for you. That will never change and can never be taken away. God loves you. Jesus died and rose again. That is

the most important truth for you. And it is true for all people. This is the Gospel, the Good News. That means we learn to love all people just as God does. We see with eyes of life, just as God does.

14. Read John 8:12. What does it mean that Christ is the light of the world?

It means that light and life win. It means that death and darkness are not what defines us. Jesus is the Son of God. He has defeated sin, death and the power of the devil. He is the victor. We see with His life and His light.

15. Is death a welcome friend to help us escape suffering?

No. Death is the enemy — see 1 Cor. 15:26. Jesus did not come to make death our friend. He came to give us life. Death is not the escape from the problems of this life. Death is a punishment for sin. We do not seek the solution to our problem in God's enemy. We seek God to be the one to whom we turn when we need help (Psalm 46).

16. Is the goal of life to be comfortable?

No. The goal of life is to love. We have been told by our society that we exist in order to be happy. But that is not true. Life is not defined by our happiness. We exist to be loved by God and to love others. When we define life by happiness or fulfillment, we lose the proper perspective of life. God gives life as a gift. And the gift God gives is one given in love.

17. How does the death of Jesus change our view of life and death?

Jesus died once and for all. And He rose from the dead to give us life. This is the whole plan and purpose of God for us. He loves us and desires for us to live forever. That means we learn to see all of life as a gift from Him. We learn that He desires life, and we are fulfilled as His creatures in life. The death and resurrection of Jesus, given to us through the Word and Sacraments, define us as His children. The death and resurrection of Jesus teaches us to love — and to see with eyes of life.