

MAKING ABORTION UNTHINKABLE - ONLY ONE QUESTION (VIDEO 9:22)

SUGGESTION: Prior to discussion, consider addressing your group with the assumption that some of them will have been directly affected by abortion. Ensure that your group knows that no matter their past there is true forgiveness available and that your group will not shame anyone who has participated in an abortion procedure. Please reach out if you need advice on how to set this up or address issues that arise. It's not uncommon for individuals to open up about past abortion experiences for the first time when going through this material.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What makes abortion “unthinkable”?
2. Why do you think abortion is often excluded from discussions about social justice issues?
3. Have you—or someone you know—changed your mind about abortion? What led to that change?
4. Why is it critical to establish the humanity of the unborn before addressing other abortion defenses?
5. What pro-choice arguments have you heard that sidestep the question, “What is the unborn?”
6. What challenges might arise when trying to redirect an abortion conversation back to the central question, “What is the unborn?”
7. How does the fact that many women seeking abortions identify as Christians affect your view of the church’s role in addressing abortion?
8. In what ways does understanding abortion as a “morally simple issue” help in having clearer and more focused conversations about it?
9. How would you respond to the claim that addressing tangential issues, like poverty or healthcare, is more urgent than focusing on abortion?
10. In what ways can understanding the value of every human being as an image-bearer of God shape how we approach conversations about abortion?

ACTION POINTS:

- Create a list of common pro-abortion arguments you’ve heard, and write out a response for each that refocuses the conversation on the key question.
- While this course does not focus on a distinctly Christian defense of the unborn, Alan does mention that a surprising number of self-identifying Christians have had abortions. This week, research Bible passages you might share with a pro-choice Christian. Start by listening to Greg Koukl’s podcast ["A Biblical Answer to Abortion"](#) and watching Amy Hall’s video ["What Does the Bible Have to Say About Abortion?"](#)
- As you move through this course, take 5 minutes every day to pray for mothers considering abortion, that your country would enforce policies that value life, that pro-life organizations would flourish, and that God would change hearts regarding abortion.

MAKING ABORTION UNTHINKABLE - TROT OUT THE TODDLER (VIDEO 8:57)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Has anyone been impacted by abortion in a significant way that would like to share with the group?
2. As we continue discussing this issue in an intellectual way, how can we make sure that we are not forgetting the way this topic is deeply connected to real people in hard situations?
3. Any feedback from the action items from last week?
4. How does “Trot Out the Toddler” reinforce the idea that the key question in abortion discussions is “What is the unborn?” Reflect on a time when a conversation about abortion veered off-topic. How could you have used this tactic to bring the focus back to the key question?
5. In what ways is the unborn like a two-year-old child? Why are they both equally valuable?
6. Why do you think most abortion-choice advocates reject the idea of killing a toddler, but defend abortion?
7. In what ways does “Trot Out the Toddler” expose the underlying disagreement about the humanity of the unborn?
8. How can the “Trot Out the Toddler” tactic be adapted for use in a conversation with someone who brings up rare but emotional scenarios, such as incest or teenage pregnancy?
9. The murder of a two-year-old is just one example of where the devaluation of life can lead when taken to its logical extreme. Where else can this lead? What are some real-world examples of this?
10. What are some potential objections to the “Trot Out the Toddler” tactic, and how might you respond to them?

• FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“Trot Out the Toddler” is a version of the “Taking the Roof Off” tactic. You take the point-of-view of the person seriously and you give it a test drive and see where else it leads. So, if a woman has a “right to choose,” then we can take that and apply it to the newborn child.

• DIGGING DEEPER

As a group, read Greg Koukl’s article [“Does the Fertility Clinic Illustration Disprove the Value of Human Embryos?”](#)

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

1. How might our emotions impact our judgments? Given your answer, how could pro-life advocates use emotions to their advantage when making a case for life?
2. When presented with the hypothetical situation in the article, how might you turn the conversation back to the question, “What is the unborn?”

ACTION POINTS:

- Memorize the three steps of the “Trot Out the Toddler” tactic: listen to the reason, ask if it justifies killing a toddler, and clarify the key issue.
- Make a list of pro-life arguments and write out how you would use the “Trot Out the Toddler” tactic to respond.
- Pray for wisdom, compassion, and patience as you engage in conversations about abortion, keeping in mind the humanity of both the unborn and the person you’re speaking with.

MAKING ABORTION UNTHINKABLE - THE UNBORN IS A HUMAN BEING (VIDEO 16:10)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Review: Have the group sum up our first two sessions.
2. What if anything has changed about your view or approach to the topic of abortion?
3. How can the scientific evidence that the unborn is alive, distinct, and human be used to engage non-religious audiences in pro-life discussions?
4. What makes a being a human?
5. What are the ethical implications of abortion if we accept the scientific evidence that the unborn is a living, distinct, and human being?
6. How would you respond to someone who argues that the unborn's appearance/size at early stages means it is not human?
7. Pro-choice advocates claim that the unborn are still a part of the mother's body, and, therefore, the mother still has the right to choose. What is wrong with this reasoning?
8. Why is the unborn distinct from the mother? Why does this distinction matter?
9. What role should videos and images play in our pro-life defense?
10. Role play: Break up into pairs. Take turns making a defense for the humanity of the unborn using the three points of the scientific case we learned in this session. Sum it up so that you make your case in two minutes or less.

• FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Understanding the scientific case for life can help us respond to abortion advocates who are convinced our arguments are only religious.

U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez stated, "There are so many faiths that do not have the same definition of life as fundamentalist Christians, so what about their right to exercise their faith? It's ridiculous. And it is theocratic. It's authoritarian. It is wrong."

But by making the pro-life position merely a religious matter, Ocasio-Cortez commits a straw man fallacy. Remember, the pro-life position doesn't need God or the Bible to be valid. Pro-lifers often argue against abortion from science and reason. If abortion-choice advocates want to address our actual view, they need to engage the science of embryology.

Furthermore, by making the pro-life position a religious matter, abortion-choice advocates relativize the issue and sometimes ignore objective fact/morality all together. When it comes to morality or religious belief, they take an "each person decides for themselves" approach.

If your pro-life position is grounded in science and reason, but your dialogue partner insists on responding to a religious justification, you need to kindly remind them of your view and ask that they engage it instead of a view you don't hold. That will help you both have a more productive conversation.

ACTION POINTS:

- Listen to Tim Barnett's [interview with Josh Braham](#) of Equal Rights Institute to learn how to respond to the different kinds of "my body, my choice" bodily rights arguments for abortion.
- Listen to this short video of Megan Almon using the argument you learned to make a case for the humanity of the unborn: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y55A0Rf2y3s>
- Watch this clip from a Reality conference as Megan Almon gives an example to help clarify that embryos are whole human beings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dwrXPivrc10>
- Find a friend willing to listen, and then explain Alan's three points from this class (i.e. the unborn is living, distinct, human).
- Reflect on your emotional response to the graphic imagery shown in the video and consider how it can motivate compassionate action in your pro-life advocacy.

MAKING ABORTION UNTHINKABLE - THE SLED TEST (VIDEO 10:10)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Review what we've learned in the first three sessions. Have the group sum up and recall your discussions from:
 1. The central question, 2. Trot out the toddler, 3. Making a case for the humanity of the unborn.
2. Pro-choice advocates sometimes distinguish between "human beings" and "human persons." What are the logical ends and moral implications of such a view?
3. How many arguments can we as a group recall that we've heard that devalue the unborn based on one of these illogical categories we learned about?
4. What makes a human being a person?
5. Why is it important to emphasize that all human beings, regardless of size, development, location, or dependency, have equal value?
6. Go through each point of SLED together and discuss why each point is not a valid reason for disqualifying the unborn as a human person.
7. In what ways does the pro-life view uphold the principle of equality better than abortion-choice arguments?
8. Alan responds to the pro-choice argument that the unborn and the born differ by sharing how all born people differ in the same categories. How is this similar to the "Trot Out the Toddler" tactic?
9. Alan gives examples of how each point of SLED and unjust discrimination apply to born persons, as well. Discuss some of your own examples.

• FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Steve Wagner formulated this quick defense of the unborn as a human being:

"If the unborn is growing, it must be alive.
If it has human parents, it must be human.
And living humans like you and I are valuable aren't they?"

People who draw a distinction between a human and a person want to use extrinsic qualities to measure someone's value, but human beings aren't valuable because of a function they perform, how conscious they are, or whether they feel pain. These things come in degrees. Humanity doesn't come in degrees. You are valuable because you are made in the image of God. That image assigns intrinsic, transcendent value and worth.

• DIGGING DEEPER

As a group, read Alan's article "[Discriminating against People with Down Syndrome.](#)"

DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

1. How would you respond to someone who agrees the unborn are human beings, but says aborting a child with Down syndrome or other genetic disorder is a mercy?
2. Where would Down syndrome fit into the SLED test? Give an example of how you would use SLED to respond to those who say it is okay for the mother to abort her child with Down syndrome?

ACTION POINTS:

- Write out each of the points of the SLED test on a small piece of paper or notecard. Tape it somewhere you can see it and repeat it to yourself each day this week. At the end of the week, recite the points by memory.
- Analyze a public pro-choice argument or article and identify how the SLED Test could respond to its claims.
- Watch this video of Megan Almon making the case that you learned this week: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNcam3319cM>

MAKING ABORTION UNTHINKABLE - ANSWERING THE TOUGH CASES (VIDEO 10:10)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Review SLED. Share feedback from reflections during the week or the action points assignments.
2. What pro-choice arguments do you consider the most difficult to respond to?
3. Should abortion be allowed when the mother's life is in danger? What action would you argue is the greater good?
4. Why is it important to show that pro-life advocates value both the lives of the unborn and the mothers in challenging cases like ectopic pregnancies?
5. Should abortion be allowed in the case of rape?
6. Alan has mentioned the importance of showing compassion several times in this course. How can a compassionate response balance out with a logical argument? Give specific examples.
7. How does acknowledging the humanity and pain of the person in front of you build credibility for the pro-life position?
8. Why does the mother have an obligation to care for her unborn child?
9. Consider some of the pro-choice arguments that you've discussed during this course. Which of the three categories Alan shares (i.e. assumes the unborn aren't human, denies the value of the unborn, puts woman's autonomy first) do each of those arguments fall under?
- Pair up! Use [Alan's chart](#) to guide a mock conversation, practicing how you would use what you've learned based on what argument you encounter.

ACTION POINTS:

- Listen to [part one](#) and [part two](#) of this podcast with Tim Barnett and Alan Shlemon, in which the two respond to popular pro-choice memes.
- If you haven't kept up with your daily prayers, that's okay. Take 5 minutes right now to pray for mothers considering abortion, that your country would enforce policies that value life, that pro-life organizations would flourish, and that God would change hearts regarding abortion.
- Share what you've learned. Maybe start your conversation with a friend with, "I just completed this course on abortion." That will perk up someone's ears. "I learned some ways of thinking and talking about it that were really eye opening." And then if your friend is interested, share a summation of what you learned, or share a pro-life apologetics talk online from one of the speakers we've mentioned and discuss it afterwards.
- As you review what you learned in this course and prepare to discuss it with others, consider taking the following steps to save lives:
 - Financially support and/or pray for a pro-life apologist, trainer or worker, or pro-life organization.
 - Volunteer for a pregnancy resource center.
 - Vote for pro-life policies or candidates.
 - Don't have an abortion yourself.
 - Encourage a friend who has a crisis pregnancy to not have an abortion. You can also refer her to a local crisis pregnancy center for more support.