

Use “The Scene” to introduce “From Learning to Life,” the High School Sunday school lesson for August 9, 2015. The lesson is found on page 59 of *High School Teacher* by Standard Publishing.

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

At this writing (August 3, 2015), the US Senate is preparing to vote on defunding Planned Parenthood, a nonprofit organization that receives \$500+ million each year in taxpayer dollars. The group offers reproductive health services, but is also identified with abortions. The Senate vote was prompted when undercover videos surfaced, reportedly showing “Planned Parenthood doctors openly discussing the sale of fetal tissue and pushing baby body parts around in a dish.” (source: Townhall.com)

Any such selling would violate the organization’s nonprofit status, of course. And the selling of human body parts is illegal in this country.

The videos apparently reveal some haggling over prices, as well as a discussion of getting more profit from selling individual parts instead of an entire fetus. Planned Parenthood argues that they aren’t *selling* baby parts at all, but “donating tissue” and “transferring” the organs to medical research organizations—and that any money involved is merely covering the cost of the transfer (which is legal), not making profit. This use of the organs, they say, is perfectly legitimate and no different than when an adult signs an organ donor statement for himself (and that, in fact, the mothers *have* officially signed off on such “donations” from their aborted babies). Their stand is that what’s being done is better than to “let the organs go unused,” and that medical research saves lives.

A seemingly unrelated news story that got tangled with this one was the story of “Cecil the Lion,” which exploded on social media. An American dentist paid around \$50,000 to be able to bag himself a lion in Zimbabwe. Which he did. Even if the hunt was legal (a point still being debated), the animal that was shot turned out to be a rather famous lion. So the news was flooded with outcries against Cecil’s “murder.” But the anti-abortion people pointed out that TV news broadcasts gave the lion story way more coverage (and sympathy) than they gave to reports of baby parts being sold—in their opinion, valuing an animal’s life over human lives.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

How do you decide what’s right and wrong? How do you decide which of your actions are no big deal and which ones might have eternal significance?

Which points in the above report make the most sense to you? Why?

Which parts bother you? Why?

How do you determine when something is God’s truth vs. when it’s just human opinion? Today we’ll get some help from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount.