



Lesson Part 1:

Level: Upper-Intermediate

Objective:

Inferring meaning
Looking at the world through another's eyes
Drawing conclusions from spoken and written texts
Analytical skills
Examining rhetoric through vocabulary

Materials: Internet Access or downloaded copy of [The Execution of Paul Hill](#) (also found here <http://www.mercyseat.net/sermons.html>, then search for the title).

Procedure:

Note: You should familiarize yourself with [Paul Hill](#) & the [Army of God](#) before the lesson.

Show the picture of Paul Hill to the class. Ask the class to take a minute and guess information about the man. They should probably be able to identify that he is associated with a church, went to jail, and is a hero to some people. Now ask the class in small groups to brainstorm how all this information is connected.

After you get some ideas, tell them Paul Hill was a former minister who was given the death penalty for killing an abortion doctor (you'll probably have to pre-teach "minister" "death penalty" and "abortion.")

Now tell them that he believed his actions were justified. In the same groups, have the class try to come up with ideas as to how he could feel murder was justified. Write their ideas up on the board.

Pre-teach vocabulary for the sermon: a deed, a verse, the Bible, evil, oppression, Scripture, a pew, and offering plate, Sunday school, lethal, righteousness, legitimate, sane, to execute, to condemn, to intervene, to slaughter, to obliterate, to repudiate, "To Kill a Mockingbird" & Boo Radley.

The verse - "See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good, both for yourselves and for all."

Hand out the [question sheet for the sermon](#).

Now play the designated parts of the sermon (Minutes 4:19 – 8:08, 10:07 – 11:18, 13:09 – 15:30, 41:20 – 42:30). [Note: This sermon is given by Pastor Matt Trehwella of Mercy Seat Church in Milwaukee, WI. He is the founder of Missionaries to the Preborn. He is a very intense and opinionated man both in his sermons and in everyday life.]

The listening always gets strong and interested reactions from the students. You should just be able to open the class up to debate and see where it goes. There are a number of themes that can be discussed following the listening such as:

The use of violence (in law, in religion, by small groups, when it's justified, etc.)

Abortion

The death penalty

The right to free speech

Alternative: Ask the class to come up with some questions they have about the people involved, the movement, etc. For homework or in the computer lab (if you have access to one) students can then do further research. Here are some useful sites:

[Mercy Seat Christian Church](#)

[The Army of God Manual](#)

[One Soldier's Story - Shelly Shannon](#)

The Brutal Truth: [Part 1](#) & [2](#) (Movement's documentary on police brutality against protests)

[Walk for Life March & Counter-Protest](#)

The Execution of Paul Hill

Part 1:

- 1) How does the pastor define good and evil?
- 2) What happens in “To Kill a Mockingbird”?
- 3) Why does the speaker tell this story?
- 4) How does the pastor defend Paul Hill’s actions?
- 5) What does the pastor think of most other Christians?

Part 2:

- 6) What’s insane? Why?
- 7) Why or how will abortion be outlawed in America?
- 8) The pastor says that Paul Hill will be viewed as a hero in the future? How does he support this belief?

Part 4:

9) Why does the pastor feel comfortable discussing the use of violence to stop abortion?

10) What should Christians do?

11) What's open for debate?

12) Why was the murder of the abortionist John Britton effective?

Part 5:

13) How does the speaker feel about the issue?

Finally:

Look at the two sets of words. What does this type of language tell us about the speaker? Why does he use it?

Set 1) To condemn, evil, Scripture, a verse, righteousness, to herald, to obliterate

Set 2) to murder, to kill babies, the preborn

Answer Key to Listening

Part 1: 4:19 – 8:08

1) How does the pastor define good and evil?

Evil is murder, especially as regards abortion. Good is defending the innocent (here the preborn). *Note: Small groups like this often have a single focus through which they view the world as is clear from this dichotomy focused on abortion.*

2) What happens in “To Kill a Mockingbird”?

Boo Radley kills a man that was threatening the two Finch children.

3) Why does the speaker tell this story?

To make an analogy between a story the listeners are very familiar with to the situation of Paul Hill.

4) How does the pastor defend Paul Hill’s actions?

Paul Hill “acted in the defense of others”

5) What does the pastor think of most other Christians?

He thinks they are evil for “sitting around and doing nothing while the slaughter is going on.” They also can’t “fill a spot in the pew, attend Sunday school...or most imporant of all, put money in the offering plate.” The pastor feels that the Church isn’t interested mainly because they cannot profit from them. *Note: Many splinter church groups in America have negative opinions of the mainstream Church.*

Part 2: 10:07 – 11:18

6) What’s insane? Why?

American culture because it allows abortion.

7) Why or how will abortion be outlawed in America?

Because “God restores righteousness to this land or obliterates it and forms a new one.” The fate of America is dependent upon the will of God and Americans ability to follow it.

8) The pastor says that Paul Hill will be viewed as a hero in the future? How does he support this belief?

In history, minorities who stand up to oppression are regarded as heroes in the future. Nazis and slavery are given as examples. *Note: Believers in this movement often felt their were extremley strong parallels to be drawn between slavery, Nazism, and abortion.*

Part 3: 13:09 – 15:30

9) Why does the pastor feel comfortable discussing the use of violence to stop abortion?

It’s established in law and Scripture that you “can use force to defend other people from physical harm.” Also, “when you see the slaughtered preborn, when you see what they look like after the abortionist is done with his dirty work.” *Note: The images are very important. Most group members relate that the moment they saw the images is when “the light bulb clicked” and they realized this is the truth they needed to defend. This is also why*

they are obsessed with showing the images to others because they believe others will convert like them.

10) What should Christians do?

Start thinking about using violence to stop abortion because if you don't "there is something wrong with you."

11) What's open for debate?

Did Paul Hill use a legitimate amount of force or too much?

12) Why was the murder of the abortionist John Britton effective?

John Britton was stopped from killing babies.

Part 4: 41:20 – 42:30

13) How does the speaker feel about the issue?

Obviously, incredibly strongly. The emotion in his voice is very evident, as is his choice of words.

Finally:

Look at the two sets of words. What does this type of language tell us about the speaker? Why does he use it?

Set 1) To condemn, evil, Scripture, a verse, righteousness, to herald, to obliterate

This is Biblical or religious language. He uses it because he and his audience are Christians. It makes sense to them and connects with them on a mental and emotional level.

Set 2) to murder, to kill babies, the preborn

He uses these words, as opposed to "abort" or "fetus" to make abortion sound less medical and more inhumane. These words tell us that he thinks the act is very wrong and that he feels the fetuses are alive and human before being born.

Lesson Part 2:

Level: Upper-Intermediate

Objective: Inferring meaning

Looking at the world through another's eyes

Drawing conclusions from spoken and written texts

Analytical skills

Examining rhetoric through vocabulary

Materials: [The Fetus Focus Fallacy](#)

<http://www.prochoiceactionnetwork-canada.org/articles/fetus-focus-fallacy.shtml>

Procedure:

By now the class has taken a look at part of the pro-life debate. Tell them they'll now be looking at the other side of the equation.

Split the class into two groups. Group 1 will state any reasons against abortion they can remember and add any more they can think of. Group 2 will try to come up with reasons for supporting Pro-Choice.

From the article mentioned in materials, I cut out [this portion](#) and hand it out.

Write 2 questions on the board:

- 1) How is the language used in this article different from that used in the sermon from the first lesson?
- 2) What are some key reasons used to defend the pro-choice argument?

Follow-Up:

Students choose sides and debate abortion.

Pro-Choice

Anti-choicers insist that the key question in the abortion debate is whether a fetus is a person or not. If so, abortion is murder, they say, and therefore obviously immoral and illegal. That is *not* the key question at all, of course - anti-choicers are committing the "fetus focus fallacy." The practice of abortion is unrelated to the status of the fetus - it hinges totally on the aspirations and needs of women. Women have abortions regardless of the law, regardless of the risk to their lives or health, regardless of the morality of abortion, and regardless of what the fetus may or may not be. On average, abortion rates do not differ substantially between countries where it's legal and countries where it's illegal. Which reveals a more pertinent question: Do we provide women with safe legal abortions, or do we let them suffer and die from dangerous illegal abortions?

Some anti-choicers argue that even though women will have abortions regardless, that doesn't mean we should make abortion legal, since we don't legalize murder just because some people will commit murder anyway. This analogy fails because everyone in society agrees that murder is wrong and must be punished, but there is no such consensus on abortion. Second, very few people commit murder, but a majority of women will either have an abortion, or would have one if they experienced an unwanted pregnancy. As we learned from Prohibition (of alcohol), criminalizing behavior that large numbers of people engage in has disastrous consequences for public health and law and order.

The real key question behind the legality of abortion is: How much do we value women's rights and lives? Because focusing on the fetus always has dire legal and social consequences for women. It's also insulting to women because it usurps their moral decision-making, as well as their bodies and wombs. The best way by far to protect fetuses and children is to help pregnant women and mothers. When women have the necessary support and resources to raise kids, we can trust them to be good mothers. If women have liberty and equality, their mothering will also be willing, happy, and confident, which further benefits children. But as soon as we bestow special rights on fetuses, we separate them from their mothers and create an adversarial relationship that hurts both. For example, pregnant drug abusers tend to forego prenatal care entirely rather than risk arrest and prosecution. By protecting the interests of fetuses, we sacrifice women's rights and autonomy, and end up harming their children in the long run. Furthermore, it's logically impossible for two beings occupying the same body to exercise two competing sets of rights - one or the other has to go.

<http://www.prochoiceactionnetwork-canada.org/articles/fetus-focus-fallacy.shtml>

Questions

- 1) How is the language used in this article different from that used in the sermon from the first lesson?

- 2) What are some key reasons used to defend the pro-choice argument?

Answer Key:

How is the language used in this article different from that used in the sermon from the first lesson?

Anti-choicer, fetus, abortion, women, law, women's rights, body, decision-making
Note: Pro-choice tends to use a lot more medical and legal language, as opposed to that of pro-life. They are also focused on human rights especially in a perhaps feminist sense of a woman's right to choose.

What are some key reasons used to defend the pro-choice argument?

Women will do it anyway and legalizing abortion makes it safer and doesn't criminalize the behavior.

It's a woman's body, so it needs to be her choice.

A fetus isn't a person.

The rights of two people can't occupy one body.