



# face time

BIBLE ANSWERS TO  
**TEENS' TOUGHEST**  
QUESTIONS

General Conference  
of Seventh-day Adventists  
Youth Ministries Department

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Youth Ministries Department

12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring, Maryland 20904, USA

Published by Review and Herald® Publishing Association, Hagerstown,  
MD 21741-1119

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17 16 15 14 13                      5 4 3 2 1

### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Face time : Bible answers to teens' toughest questions / General Conference Youth Ministries Department.

p. cm.

1. Christian life—Textbooks. 2. Conduct of life—Textbooks. 3. Seventh-Day Adventists—Doctrines.

4. Christian teenagers—Religious life—Textbooks. 5. Christian teenagers—Conduct of life—Textbooks.

I. General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists. Youth Ministries Dept.

# Dear Reader,

It is with fervent prayer and great anticipation that we release *Face Time*. We hope that the biblical wisdom and insights you find here will draw you closer to Christ and challenge you to take a stand on some of the complex issues we face today.

Here is a navigation guide to the sections you'll find in each lesson:

**Icebreaker:** This is an introductory question, explanation, or short story that draws a practical connection between the subject of the lesson and the life of the youth.

**Dig In:** This section aims to connect the lesson to your emotions and experiences.

**Hot Potato:** This section includes perspectives on both sides of the issue; the lessons are aimed at helping you take a stand, and also prepare you for questions that may be asked.

**Hot Potato Questions:** These act as a follow-up to the hot potato section to facilitate further discussion and study.

**Bible Discovery:** A series of scriptures to ground each lesson and help you grow in faith.

**Extra Gem:** Supplemental quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy.

**Sharing Time:** This represents creative and practical ideas for sharing what you have learned through the study.

**Consider This:** A challenge for the week to apply the lesson to your daily life.

May God continue to bless you as you begin this journey with Him.

—General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Youth Ministries  
Department

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# Abortion

## a Christian perspective

**T**his is a sensitive study, and opinions will vary about this issue. Be especially careful not to pass judgment while doing this study with your group. They may be affected by this topic on different levels. Maintain an atmosphere that will allow all individuals to be heard. You may never know the impact you will leave with them—or how it may help your young people with future decisions.

### Icebreaker

No matter how you look at it, war is not pretty. What started in heaven with its catastrophic consequences spilled onto our planet, and person against person has followed in the course of history. The Bible describes battles of complete annihilation. Genocide is also part of biblical history.

Throughout time war has been a part of humanity's planning. As technology has advanced, the weapons of war have become more and more sophisticated, changing the landscape of wars. We know that war will continue on this earth as one person battles another—until a great final conflict will end war forever.

While war reshapes landmasses and countries, it also brings with it one of its greatest consequences—the loss of life.

In the twentieth century alone there have been more than 100 acts of war and genocide on our planet. And the cost in human life has been staggering—more than 160 million men and women perished. To put that number in perspective, that's approximately half of the current U.S. population, and those are just the known casualties from the 1900s.

### Dig In

There is another battle going on for life. And the statistics for this battle are even more staggering. Regarding the amount of lives lost, it far exceeds the number of lives lost in worldwide conflicts from just this past century. What is this battle that is costing so many innocent lives? Abortion.

Abortion is a deliberate termination of pregnancy. It can be done at any point in the life of the fetus inside the womb. It almost always results in the death of the fetus. There have been several noted cases of a baby surviving attempted abortions, but those are rare.

Statistics are just that—statistics. Many things can affect the numbers. And in the case of abortion, that is even more true. Many abortions throughout the world go unreported. But of those that are, the numbers are staggering. Every day there are approximately 115,000 known abortions performed on our planet. That adds up to 42 million lives lost each year. Multiply that by the years in the century, and you'll see that millions more lives are lost to abortion than to war.

## **Hot Potato**

Most of the nations of the world allow abortion for various reasons. Almost all of the world allows abortions to be performed if the life of the mother is in danger. Only Chile, El Salvador, Malta, Nicaragua, and the Vatican City outlaw abortion completely. (Leaders—see the following Web site for further information: [www.pregnantpause.org/lex/world02map.htm](http://www.pregnantpause.org/lex/world02map.htm).)

The issue of abortion has become about a woman's right to choose to end the life of her fetus. But does that right come at a cost?

What are women choosing to end through abortion? The heartbeat begins on the twenty-first day after conception—a time when most women are not even aware that they are pregnant. At 10 weeks the human body is completely formed. Fingerprints are already in place. The fetus' cells have already begun specializing—the outer layer of the fertilized egg becoming the nervous system, skin, and hair. The middle layer becomes the skeleton, muscles, circulatory system, kidneys, and sex organs. And the inner layer will become the breathing and digestive organs.

Many women who choose to end the life of their fetus do so at a high cost. Guilt and depression often accompany abortion. One woman who underwent abortions two times by her twenty-third birthday also tried to commit suicide three times by her twenty-seventh birthday as a result of her choices. That response isn't out of the ordinary. One young girl said that it hurts to see baby things because it brings back sad memories. Another stated that she thinks about it every day. She regrets her decision. She cautions others to think about whether the pain of nine months outweighs the pain of a lifetime.

So why do so many women choose abortion if it causes such pain? Eighty-three percent of abortions worldwide are performed in developing countries. Only 17 percent of abortions that are performed are done in developed countries. Most (75 percent) of those choosing abortion say that a baby would interfere with work, school, or other responsibilities. Those same individuals cite lack of finances as the main reason for not wanting a

child at the time of the abortion. The largest majority of those choosing abortion belong to the lowest income levels. The cost of raising a child is high—especially in countries with weaker economies where the struggle to survive is extremely difficult.

### Hot Potato Questions

- Who is the Creator of life? Does God care about every life that He creates?
- When do you think life begins? At conception? When a baby can live outside of the mother's womb?
- Why is it important to define when life begins? Can that make a difference in how you decide to view a fetus?
- If you had to make an important decision such as whether or not to have an abortion, where would you turn for guidance and help?
- Do you think that it is a woman's right to choose an abortion in cases of rape, or if the mother's life is in danger? Why or why not?
- Do you think God forgives us if we make a decision that goes against His will? Explain your answer.
- Is it easier to let God forgive us than to forgive ourselves?
- In studying about issues such as abortion, does it make more sense to follow God's original plan for sexual intimacy to be a part of marriage?

### Bible Discovery

**Psalm 139:13, 14.** Why did King David say that he was “fearfully and wonderfully made”? What does that mean to you? As you study how the body works together to sustain life, do you think you are a miracle? Does God know us before we are born? Should that make a difference when we make a decision about abortion? Why or why not?

**Psalm 22:9, 10.** When does God consider us His creation? As the cells divide and create a body, does God already love and cherish the fetus? Babies are vulnerable and must depend on their mothers. Do you think that God wants us to have that same relationship with Him? Does that mean He can be trusted to help us, even in the hardest of times?

**James 1:27.** Whom does the Bible say we are to give care to? Can you see the principle that God wants us to care for those who are unable to care for themselves? Would that include unborn children? Why or why not? How



can we help those that are not yet born? What kind of activities do you think a Christian should be involved with in relation to the fight for the unborn?

**Psalm 51.** This was written after David committed adultery with Bathsheba. As a result, they lost the child that was conceived because of that sin. Do you think David found the forgiveness he was seeking? Does God want to forgive us when we make mistakes? Verse 17 tells us that God wants only a contrite heart. Do you think someone who has chosen abortion can find peace in God? Why or why not?

**1 John 1:9, 10** and **1 John 2:1, 2.** Do these verses promise that God will forgive our mistakes if we ask? In addition to forgiving, what else does He do? Does cleansing mean that our sins are washed away? When you wash the dirt out of your clothing, is it gone forever? God wants to do that for us, too. What does an advocate do? Is it good news to know that you have an advocate who talks to your heavenly Father about you? Can you trust Him to guide you in making the right choices for your life? Can you accept His forgiveness and can you offer it to others who may have made difficult choices?

#### EXTRA GEM

Ellen White wrote about the importance God places on our lives. Read what she wrote:

“Every one should consider the solemn question, What is my life toward God and my fellow-men? No man liveth unto himself. No life is simply neutral in its results. The enemy often blinds the mind in regard to the importance of life; but it is of vast importance, and we cannot cast off our responsibilities without imperiling our eternal interests. We shall be held accountable for doing our duty to God and to our fellow-men. Our false theories of life will not lessen the claims that are upon us, or make void the relation that exists between us and humanity. We cannot break the thread of our obligation to others. Our obligations not only concern this life, but are as far reaching as eternity, and we cannot fulfill them without divine aid. Our life was given us of God, and is dependent upon Him, as the leaf is dependent upon the bough for sustenance. What is Christian life? It is a life rescued, a life taken out of a world of sin, and attached to the life of Christ. It is the life of one to whom has been imputed the righteousness of Christ” (Youth’s Instructor, June 21, 1894).

## **Sharing Time**

Your friends may look to you for help in making difficult choices. What advice would you give them if they came to you when trying to make an important decision? Make a list of Bible verses you could use to help them choose the best for their life. Thinking about it ahead of time will help you be ready when they need you.

## **Consider This**

Often the most difficult thing to do is to forgive ourselves. Have you made a decision that you regret? Know that God will forgive you—all you have to do is ask! Place whatever burden you are carrying into God's hands; then let Him carry that burden for you. Pray and ask God to do this; He will carry the load. Whenever the devil tempts you to pick the burden back up, tell him, "NO!" God will take it from you—all you have to do is ask and leave it with Him.

# Abuse

## when home sweet home isn't so sweet

**T**his lesson can be an especially sensitive one. Often abuse is hidden well, especially within the church family. Cover this lesson with prayer and understanding, for you may be working with young people experiencing abuse themselves. Also, remind your young people that they should never put themselves in danger when trying to help someone in an abusive situation. Tell them to always go to someone to help them if they suspect abuse is taking place.

### Icebreaker

More than 100 years ago a song was written that still brings a sense of wistfulness to its listeners. You won't hear it on the radio, but you may still hear it being sung around campfires. The words may not be familiar to you, but they were to American soldiers during the Civil War.

“ ‘Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam, Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home!’”

Those are two lines from a song by John Howard Payne, which he later incorporated into an opera.

Close your eyes and imagine it's twilight, and the only sounds you hear are musical. No guns, no moaning of injured soldiers, no shouts of readiness, just the sounds of two bands playing: one on each side of their opposing camps brought together by their longing for home, singing the same song that, for the moment, unites them. This was the scene of many battlefields during the American Civil War. One band of musicians would start the song, and soon soldiers would begin singing. Soon the music would start on the enemy side, with soldiers ceasing their activities to join in. For a moment they weren't soldiers fighting against each other, but travelers longing for home.

For the author of “Home, Sweet Home,” life ended far from his own home. He died and was buried in Tunis in 1852. It wasn't until 1883 that people, remembering Payne and his gift of song, brought his remains home to America. As his casket was brought onto land, a 65-piece band played his favorite and well-loved song. After thousands paid their respects to him in New York City, President Chester Arthur accompanied his body to Washington, D.C.'s famous Oak Hill Cemetery, where he was buried.

## **Dig In**

John Payne's body may have been returned to his native country, but his home life had not been so sweet. He had struggled for many years and was a terrible money manager.

For many Christian families, home isn't so sweet either. Sadly, religion is not a deterrent when it comes to abuse. Statistics show that there is almost as much abuse going on in Christian homes as there is in homes without religion. In fact, it is estimated that one in three young people will experience some form of abuse in their homes.

It is also estimated that up to 56 percent of marriages fall victim to some form of abusive behavior. This is a sad reality for many.

## **Hot Potato**

Abuse comes in many forms, but is almost always centered on power and control.

Abuse can be emotional, economic, sexual, physical, and even spiritual. Abusers use such tactics as isolation, mind games, withholding money, intimidation, manipulation of children and pets, control over decisions, and threats to gain power in a relationship. Abusers believe they have the right to hold supreme control over their partner or children. Abuse doesn't have boundaries, either—not gender, age, race, marital status, and sadly, not religious orientation. And for Christians, unfortunately, abuse at home is rarely reported.

## **Hot Potato Questions**

- Why do you think God allows abuse, especially when children and women are involved? Do you think that it hurts Him too?
- How do we know that God has a tender heart for those who are most vulnerable?
- What do you think causes people to become abusive? Do you think abusers are victims themselves?
- Is there a line between discipline and abuse with children? Who draws that line? Why do you think this way?
- Is neglect a form of abuse? Why or why not?
- Do you think a person suffering from abuse should have to stay with their abuser? What if it is a young person?
- If there were someone in your church that you knew was suffering from abuse, where would you send them for help? Should abuse ever be

kept quiet? Why or why not?

- Can the pain and shame of abuse be forgiven, and can healing take place?

### **Bible Discovery**

**Proverbs 13:24.** Is this verse difficult to understand? Do you think that this verse means that a parent should use corporal punishment to discipline their children? What occupation mentioned in the Bible used a rod? Shepherds used rods. Did shepherds use rods to strike their sheep? The answer is no! The rod wasn't used to strike the sheep at all—it was used for guiding them. Does that help to make this verse clearer? God disciplines us, and sometimes it hurts. But that discipline brings us back in line with His will. Do you think that that is what Solomon was describing here? (See also Proverbs 23:13 and Proverbs 29:15.)

**Galatians 5:19-25.** Do you think that some of the characteristics in verses 19-21 are found in abusers? Can those characteristics be hidden? Why or why not? Could there be someone being abused in your church without you knowing about it? Do you think that God can change the heart of an abuser and replace the bad with the fruit of the Spirit? Should a person who has been abused be forced to forgive their abuser? Why do you think this way? Can you have the true Spirit and hold on to anger and hurt? Why or why not?

**Matthew 18:6.** Does Jesus have a special place in His heart for children? Why do you think He says that it will be so hard in judgment for those who hurt and abuse children? If Jesus cares so much for the helpless, shouldn't we also care for them? Is there anything we can do to help those who are being abused? Is it ever wrong to intervene? Can it be dangerous? Can you think of helpful ways to handle abusive situations?

**Ephesians 6:1-4.** What is the promise that this commandment gives to young people? Are obeying and honoring always the same thing? Do you think God requires you to obey someone who is telling you to do something against Him? Explain why you feel this way. What could you do if someone were causing you to break God's commandments? Do you have someone you could talk to about abuse if you needed to? Why might it be hard to talk about abuse with others? Do these verses tell us that there is to be a reciprocal relationship between a young person and their parents, both showing the character of their heavenly Father?

**Isaiah 60:18.** This verse is a promise. Where do you think this promise will take place? Does that mean we shouldn't work to end violence here

and now? Abuse started because of sin. Will it end with sin? What can we do to encourage others to respect their partners and children? Can the hope of heaven help those who are suffering some form of abuse? What can you do to help make others aware of abuse, especially as it occurs within the walls of a Christian home?

#### EXTRA GEM

Ellen White was shown how true, godly love can transform our world. Read what she wrote: “Love’s agencies have wonderful power, for they are divine. The soft answer that ‘turneth away wrath,’ the love that ‘suffereth long, and is kind,’ the charity that ‘covereth a multitude of sins’—would we learn the lesson, with what power for healing would our lives be gifted! How life would be transformed and the earth become a very likeness and foretaste of heaven!” (*The Adventist Home*, p. 195).

### Sharing Time

Learn the signs of a possible abuser. Don’t be afraid to speak up if you feel someone needs your help.

#### Possible Warning Signs of an Abuser

- Controls all aspects of the victim’s life
- Blames other people (including the victim) for their own problems and mistakes
- Shows cruelty toward animals and vulnerable people
- Excuses violent behavior after the fact
- Can suddenly be very moody and jealous
- Deprives victim of necessities
- Isolates victim from supportive friends and family

### Consider This

Statistics say that one in three young people will experience some form of abuse in their lifetime. Maybe you never will, but chances are you will likely know someone who will. Be prepared. Whom would you turn to for help? What help would you be able to give? How do you feel about helping? Explore these thoughts and come up with a list of people, places, and ideas to offer others who might need your help. Remember, they may be vulnerable, but you can make a difference.

# End of product sample

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