

# A Spirit-Led Conversation

*How Silence and Dependence on the Holy Spirit Made a Difference*



GRACE FONTENOT'S MONTHLY UPDATE



SEPTEMBER 2017

Dear Friends and Family,

“Andrew” walked up as I sat by JFA's "Stop and Think" exhibit at Purdue University, pondering whether or not I had ended my previous conversation too soon. “Nick,” the student I had spoken to just minutes prior, had been very cold to me and I had prayed for the Holy Spirit’s guidance for what to do. I had ended the conversation after 45 minutes with Nick, believing that the Holy Spirit was prompting me to talk to someone else.

It became clear as I started talking to Andrew that the Lord had indeed worked through that decision. Andrew’s demeanor was the complete opposite of Nick’s. Andrew had this humility about him that enabled us to have a very genuine discussion about an issue that, for many, hardens their hearts. When I asked what his thoughts about abortion were, he explained to me that he believed it should be legal in the first trimester. So I brought out the JFA Exhibit Brochure, and showed him images of the unborn at different stages of development in order to learn more about his specific view:

**Grace:** Andrew, I have pictures of what the unborn looks like at six different stages during the first trimester, as well as later on in pregnancy. Out of these six photos, which of these stages do you think marks when life begins?

**Andrew:** Based on this, I’d say it starts here *[pointing to four-week embryo]*, but I really don’t know anything about the biology, if I’m being honest. I haven’t looked into it yet.

**Grace:** Would it be helpful to you if I share information that I have learned about the biology of human development?

**Andrew:** Sure, I would appreciate that.

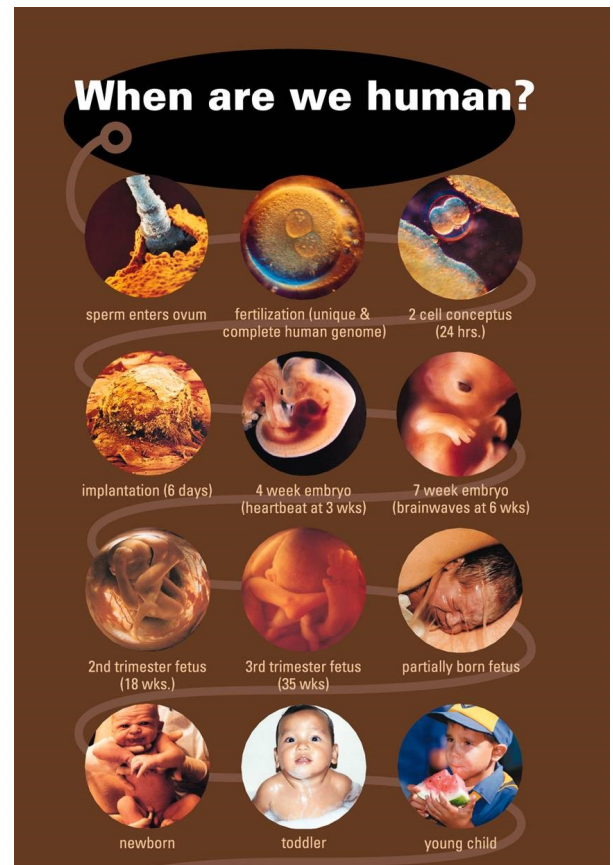
**Grace:** Well we actually do know that life begins not *here [pointing at the four-week stage]*, but *here [pointing at the images of the time of fertilization]*, when the sperm enters the ovum and conception occurs. In fact, in an embryology textbook used in college courses, Doctors Ronan O’Rahilly and Fabiola Müller have stated that “a new, genetically distinct human organism is formed when the chromosomes of the male and female pronuclei blend in the oocyte.” In simpler terms, a new human being comes into existence when the egg and sperm combine.

Andrew became very quiet at this point in the conversation. After pausing for a few moments and allowing him to process this new information, the Holy Spirit led me to ask him another question.

**Grace:** So Andrew, what are your thoughts about this? Can we agree now that life begins at conception?

Andrew gave me a sad smile, and quietly said, “Yes.” Feeling even more powerfully the promptings of the Holy Spirit, I asked him a bolder question, a harder one that I normally wouldn’t ask so early on in a conversation.

**Grace:** We agree, then, that life begins at conception. So what I’m wondering is this: Let’s set the issue of abortion aside for a moment. Does anyone *ever* have the right to take the life of another human being?



**Andrew:** No.

**Grace:** I agree. So then, is it *just*, is it *right*, is it *ever acceptable* for a woman to take the life of another human being through abortion?

**Andrew:** [pause] No.

**Grace:** Ever?

**Andrew:** No... [another pause ensued] ...except in the case that the woman has been raped.

When he said this, a red flag went up in my mind. Anytime someone brings up the question of rape in a conversation about abortion, it's important to remember that I don't know the person with whom I'm talking. Perhaps a close friend or family member, or even he himself, could be a victim of this horrific crime. So when Andrew made this statement, I was aware of the strong possibility that there was an emotional barrier in his heart, preventing him from embracing a fully pro-life view.

**Grace:** I understand. I think rape is a horrific crime. I know many women and men from across the country who have suffered this injustice; often the rapists are not punished, and it makes me so very angry to know that the precious souls against whom this evil was committed will never see justice done. Andrew, do you know someone who has been through this?

Andrew nodded, and there was yet another silence. However, the silence that passed between us spoke volumes to me. I can't tell you for certain what is the rest of Andrew's story. Perhaps his sister, his mother, or his best friend was raped. If that person got pregnant, perhaps she had an abortion. Perhaps he personally encouraged her to get an abortion. Perhaps he drove her to the clinic, truly believing that what he was doing was right in such a tragic situation. I didn't know then, and I doubt I will ever know for sure. All I could do, in that moment, was to be there with him. To hurt with him. To pray silently for the Holy Spirit to continue to mold our hearts and guide him closer to the truth and mercy of the Father.

Though I wasn't certain about the specifics of Andrew's story, I wanted him to have resources available if he did in fact have a friend hurting from a past abortion. So, feeling the promptings of the Holy Spirit, before the conversation ended I gave Andrew information for Rachel's Vineyard\* (a retreat ministry that helps men and women with abortion in their past to find healing). I then told him about the many women and men I've met who are well-meaning and beautiful people and who are hurting from the abortions in their past. When Andrew walked away, it seemed clear to me that he had a broken heart, and my heart broke for him that day as it has continued to do every day since.

There are an average of nearly one million abortions every year in the US. That is not only nearly one million lives that are lost, but nearly two million men and women whose hearts are being broken—often without them even realizing it. Please join me in praying for the men and women like Andrew, who recognize the hard truth and are trying to reconcile it in their hearts.

For the sake of His sorrowful passion,



On the same day that I talked to Andrew, I had the privilege of talking to these two students.

\* For more information about Rachel's Vineyard, and other resources for healing after abortion, visit: [www.jfaweb.org/healing-after-abortion](http://www.jfaweb.org/healing-after-abortion).

