

One Conversation Changes One Life

Impact Report

Rebekah Dyer traveled to five states to participate in six JFA outreach events in 2019. She is a big encouragement to everyone on the JFA team. In this Impact Report, she tells about one of her favorite conversations from the year, in which God gifted her with a glimpse of the impact He was making through her efforts. Rebekah is also a prolific writer, posting regularly at the Human Defense Initiative (www.humandefense.com/author/rebekahdyer). - Steve Wagner, Executive Director

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Because of the support and prayers of friends and family, I was able to travel to JFA events at the University of New Mexico, UCLA, Benedictine College, University of Kansas, University of Oklahoma, and the University of Arizona.

At every outreach, I was able to have many good conversations with people communicating the value human beings intrinsically possess from conception to natural death.

The most encouraging conversation I had this year was at the University of Arizona. I spoke with “Joe,” a young man who expressed his support for abortion being legal because he saw it as being a “necessary evil” that could prevent suffering in the future. When I began to ask him questions to further understand his position, I found out he had a close friend who grew up in foster care where he suffered abuse and needed therapy and counseling for the mental trauma he went through. It became clear that Joe wanted abortion legal because he didn’t want people to suffer. As misguided as it was, I realized that he was actually a compassionate person who didn’t want people to suffer like his friend. He was just channeling that compassion in support of something that is not compassionate at all—abortion.

I commended him for his compassion and desire to be a good friend and then I asked how his friend was doing. Once we spoke about things that were a little more personal, I then proceeded to gently make the case that suffering does not justify killing someone no matter what stage of life he/she is in. I asked him if he believed it would be okay to kill a two-year-old



Rebekah is pictured above in three of her many conversations at JFA’s University of Arizona outreach last month. Another JFA volunteer who traveled to participate, Enrico, is pictured also in the middle image (left).

One Conversation Changes One Life (Continued)

in foster care who we knew would suffer a lot? He said no. I then applied that to the issue of abortion: just because humans endure suffering and some grow up in horrible environments, it does not follow that someone else has the right to end that person's life to prevent future suffering. Suffering does not diminish a person's value or right to life. We should be caring for the suffering and vulnerable more; not advocating that someone should be able to decide that someone else should die at an earlier stage of life.

We exchanged a few words about our personal lives and then we parted ways. Later that day, I was told by a JFA staff person that Joe came back to the exhibit and told her he had changed his mind on supporting abortion after speaking with me!

It made me think of all the other people impacted by conversations that don't come back to tell us. I don't know what the tipping point was for him in our conversation. I do know that his change of heart was something God did. Not me. I am acutely aware that my words and what I say have no power in themselves to change anyone. Being able to see changed hearts on this issue is very rare. God is working behind the scenes in the hearts of the people in front of us. Every once in awhile, He allows us to see the work He is doing by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God uses all of our interactions with people—the good ones and the really hard ones. Oftentimes, it is very difficult to see His hand in the work up close as so many people seem so hardened in their support for abortion. It can be difficult to feel like I'm kept in the dark as to the results—to feel like no matter what I say and do, nothing changes for the most part. I need to remind myself that my feelings are often not good indicators of what is true. God is working in the hearts of people, and He will accomplish His purpose through imperfect servants who are willing to step out and have a conversation about a difficult issue.

Without Jesus, people are hopeless and lost. Wherever we are, and with whomever we speak, “we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us” (II Cor. 5:20). Only in Him are we set free. And when the Son sets us free, we are free indeed (John 8:36).

-Rebekah Dyer, JFA Volunteer



Top: Our team created conversations at University of Arizona, using two image kiosks and two poll tables like those pictured here.

Middle: Rebekah interacts with a University of Oklahoma student at the JFA Free Speech Board in early November.

Bottom: At the University of Oklahoma outreach, Rebekah and JFA Director Steve Wagner spoke at length with a young woman who turned out to be very receptive not only to the pro-life position, but also to the possibility that knowing moral concepts like virtue, rights, and “ought” can be as real and “solid” (or, indeed, more “solid”) as scientific knowledge.