



# Transition

Update from Jacob Burow - July 2014



Dear faithful supporters,

I have many mixed feelings as I announce that I have decided to move on from JFA. I have worked with this great organization for the majority of the last thirteen years and have learned so much during that time. I have learned many things, the most important of these being that *people matter*.

People like Ross matter. I met Ross at a recent outreach we were conducting to train our summer interns how to be good at dialogue. Ross is an atheist and pro-choice. Ross was about to go on a mission trip to Honduras with a church.

It began with me listening in to one of our interns as she asked Ross what his views on abortion are. He did not think abortion was great, but did not think we should restrict it. Our intern asked him several good questions that made him stop and reconsider what he was saying. Eventually she needed help presenting the Equal Rights Argument, and I joined in the conversation. “Ross, you have said that you think people should be treated equally, and that animals do not deserve the same rights as humans. I’m curious who you think are persons?”

“Well, we are.”

“Can we include all of the students here

on campus for our thought experiment?”

“Sure.”

“Ross, what is it that is equal about all of us that would demand equal treatment?”

He thought about the question. “I guess that we all have rational thought.”



Ross talking to Anne Marie, one of our summer interns, just before I joined the conversation

“What do you mean by ‘rational thought?’”

“Well, look at all of this,” he waved a hand around. “We build buildings, we make art, we have laws and justice. We could not do that if we were not rational.”

“Ross, I think all of those things are good. What do you think

about an infant who cannot do those things—do they deserve equal rights?”

“Wow, that is a tough question. I hadn’t thought about the fact that they can’t do those things. But I guess they will eventually, right? They are on the way.”

“Couldn’t I say the same about the fetus? Isn’t it on the way?”

Ross was stumped, and he admitted it. I explained that being human is something that we all have in common, and that seems like a better explanation of why we deserve equal treatment because it does not exclude

infants. He said he would have to rethink his views on abortion, and he thanked us for the thought-provoking conversation. But I had one more question for him.

“Ross, you said earlier that you think humans are more valuable than animals. Why is that?”

“Honestly I have no idea. I guess it is a just a feeling I have.”

“I know what you mean. I have that same deep feeling that humans matter more. I think I have an explanation of why. Could I share that with you?”

“Sure. Go for it!”

“I think humans are special because about two thousand years ago a controversial Jewish guy walked out of his own tomb. His name is Jesus; I’m sure you have heard of him. He believed in the Jewish scriptures which say that God created man in his image and likeness. I think that is why we are special, and I think there is good evidence that Jesus rose from the dead and that we can trust his teaching.”

“Well, I know Jesus was a real person, but I don’t believe that he rose from the dead.”

“Could I share with you why I think he did?”

“Why not? Go for it!”

I spent the next few minutes presenting a case for the resurrection of Christ. I explained how from material even skeptical historians believe is reliable, one can gather enough data to conclude that Jesus was real, and that he actually died and rose from the dead. Ross was very thoughtful as I finished.

“I’ve never heard it explained that way, I don’t have any response for you. But thanks for sharing that with me. I will certainly think about it.”

My prayer is that the seed that was planted would come to fruition as he goes on a mission trip with his mother’s church. Ross and I parted ways, but my prayers go with him. I believe that God is working on him and calling him.

People matter, and I am committed to helping others learn to dialogue with people like Ross. So what will I be doing when I leave JFA? Along with my fiancée Katie, I have decided to start a new pro-life organization called the Abortion Dialogue Academy (ADA). I’ll be in touch soon about the details, once my employment with JFA ends on July 31, 2014. Although I’ll still be working to end abortion, ADA will accomplish this with a different emphasis than JFA. I’m excited to share my vision and passion for this new direction with you, and I hope you will continue to support my work.

I can say that it has been a joy to work at JFA, and this experience has impacted my life in a tremendous way. JFA is committed to teaching people the art of good dialogue, and I would encourage you to continue supporting JFA’s work. The staff here have been my second family, and leaving will be hard for me. I am confident that God has called me to this new direction and uniquely prepared me for it. Thank you all for your faithful prayers and support! This journey would not be possible without you.

God Bless,



**P.S. My new contact information is listed below. Feel free to touch base!**