

WHAT WOULD JOSEPH DO?

When I saw the young woman “Joe” had driven to the abortion clinic, my heart dropped. Even from a distance, she was visibly pregnant. I thought, “Her child is possibly old enough to survive outside the womb!”

I, my wife Brit, our three toddlers, and newly born Talitha were standing outside Feminist Women’s Health Center, an abortion clinic in Atlanta. As Justice For All representatives in Georgia, we try to stay involved with other pro-life activists in the community. We were there with a group of sidewalk counselors to pray for the people going into the abortion clinic and to try to talk to women about not going through with their scheduled abortions. One of the counselors was holding a sign that said, “Call for help.”

Joe, in frustration, asked, “What are they going to do if I call that number?” We told him we were there to help both he and the girl he had driven to the clinic.



Above: I am outside Feminist Women’s Health Center talking to Joe (far left) about helping Wendy so she does not go through with her scheduled abortion.

He explained that he was *not* the father, but that he wanted to help his friend, “Wendy,” in a crisis and did not know of any other way to help her.

Then began a kind of dance. Thinking about the things we had shared with him, Joe would quietly and pensively enter the abortion clinic. He would talk to Wendy. She would refuse to listen. Joe

would come back. We would talk some more, and then he would walk back to the abortion clinic again.

Joe’s dance back and forth between us and the abortion clinic took so long that four other women walked out of the clinic and told us they decided not to go through with their abortions. I believe Joe’s doubt was changing their minds!



The Fantastic Four are happy, healthy, and overwhelmed with Christmas gifts from their **very** generous grandparents, uncles, and aunts.



Team Nels went on vacation to Gatlinburg. On a hike, Helen found a tree shaped like an “h.” She joyfully exclaimed, “Look, Poppa! God made a tree for ME!”



The big girls are Momma’s little helpers. They love to help wash dishes. I hope this continues on into the teenage years.

The security guards for the abortion clinic began to question Joe, thinking he might have been a pro-life plant inside the clinic. The guards searched Joe for pro-life literature to be sure he was not there to stop the other women from having abortions.

Quite honestly, Joe was conflicted. He knew that helping Wendy was the right thing to do, but he also knew deep down that abortion was the wrong choice. He wanted to help Wendy and to save her baby, but Joe knew this was not his child and was concerned he would be forcing his beliefs on her.

Wendy was not budging, and she refused even to come out of the clinic to talk with us. Joe eventually talked her out of the clinic...but not to talk to us. He convinced her to get some lunch and to reschedule her abortion for the next day.

My stomach was in knots. Joe had taken my card and promised to call, but for days...silence. I called him...nothing.

I carried my phone around like a teenage girl waiting for the high school quarterback to call and ask her to the prom.

Joe's silence made me fear the worst, but after two long weeks, he finally called! Wendy had decided not to go through with her abortion, but she was fearful of how her family would react to her pregnancy. She was considering adoption, but she did not think anyone would want a "mixed baby."

Wanting to dispel their fears about racism, and momentarily forgetting my three-week-old baby at home, I blurted out, "I want the baby!" Although my offer to parent Wendy's child was genuine, we were glad that Wendy decided to keep her baby.

Joe and Wendy were shocked. They did not understand how or why total strangers would agree to parent a child that did not belong to them. I told them,

"People matter. This baby matters, and we will do whatever we can to help you and save this child."

Thankfully, Wendy bravely decided to parent her child. Being a single mother can be a terrifying proposition, so pray for her as she journeys down this difficult, sometimes lonely, road.

Joe's actions on behalf of Wendy and her baby remind me of another Joe. Many years ago, at the first Christmas, Joseph of Nazareth responded to God's call to be just, to be merciful, and to walk humbly with his God. Like Joseph before him, Joe in Atlanta is giving of his time, his resources, and his energy to support a child that is not his own.

A few weeks ago, we had the privilege of attending a baby shower for Wendy. A sonogram showed she has a **GIRL!** As you know, Team Nels is fond of girls.

At the shower Wendy told us that when she was in the abortion clinic she could see our daughters from a distance and that our little Talitha's presence that day made her stop to think about what was really growing inside her. We rejoiced greatly at the news that our daughter's presence may have been a greater witness than all of our words. Wendy's baby girl is due in January, and we ask for your prayers for her and her little girl.

Praise!

Wendy's baby will have a birth day!

Three new families have joined my support team!

Prayer:

Wendy needs God's help to parent her daughter as a single mother.

Pray for all the women considering abortion or hurting from their past abortions.

Pray for the upcoming JFA March outreach in Georgia.

Will you join me this year in being like the two Joes?

Will you help me continue to seek and save children who are not our own? "This is what the LORD says: 'Maintain justice and do what is right, for my salvation is close at hand and my righteousness will soon be revealed.'" (Isaiah 56:1)

At your service,

Jacob

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"Knowledge without grace produces victories with no converts."

- Phillip Joseph