

Aubree Changes Her Mind

REBEKAH DYER'S JFA UPDATE

APRIL 2020



Dear Friend,

On February 7th, I began serving as a Spring 2020 Intern with Justice For All. Before COVID-19 forced us to cancel the events JFA had planned for later in the spring, I was able to travel to Texas three times for outreach events at the University of North Texas, Trinity University, University of Texas at San Antonio, and University of Texas at Dallas.

One of the most memorable interactions I had this spring was at UT Dallas. A young woman I'll call "Aubree" came up to our poll table that asked, "Should Abortion Remain Legal?" As she signed the Yes side, I approached her and asked her what she thought about abortion. Aubree proceeded to tell me she didn't like abortion, but she thought it should be legal because making a law against abortion would cause more women to get hurt. She expressed the concern that even if we made abortion illegal, women would die in back-alley abortions, and it wouldn't really prevent abortion at all. She went on to explain she also believes life begins at conception and that abortion kills an innocent human being.

There are many people like Aubree who claim to be pro-life, believe the unborn is human like you and me, and yet believe that abortion should be legal. The problem with this is multi-faceted. First, they are telling you abortion is killing an innocent human but that abortion should still be legal. Then they often support this with a second statement like the back-alley abortion claim.

The challenge in this view is that to some extent there is truth to it. Having a law against abortion won't stop all abortions. Laws do not prevent all people from engaging in a particular action, but that does not mean we should not have legislation against a particular act if it is harming or killing another person.

I began to walk through her concerns with her, and we



Above, I talk with "Aubree" at UT Dallas in early March, before COVID-19 cancellations. Below, I talk with a pro-choice student at Trinity University in February.



JUSTICE FOR ALL - TRAINING THOUSANDS TO MAKE ABORTION UNTHINKABLE FOR MILLIONS, ONE PERSON AT A TIME

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applied her reasoning for keeping abortion legal to other issues. Laws against child abuse and rape do not prevent all those crimes from occurring, but they *do* mitigate the behavior. In addition, laws reflect what our society values. If we did not have laws against child abuse and rape, that would reveal a disturbing culture that does not have concern for the wellbeing of vulnerable people victimized by these evil acts. In the same way, if abortion is killing an innocent human being (which it is), then we should have laws against it.

Another helpful way to process this is to imagine we were talking about women having the right to kill their newborns. Imagine that someone argues that infanticide should be legal and safe for women because if it were illegal, women would just get hurt in back alleys trying to kill their newborns. This helps to clarify the point and keep the discussion on one central question: *What is the unborn?*

Of course we don't want women to die in "back-alley abortions," and we should take measures to help women not desire to take that risk. But because abortion is killing an innocent human being, it should not remain legal.

Towards the end of my conversation with Aubree, we began discussing women's rights, and I remarked how I thought it was sad that the idea of women's rights is so interconnected with abortion. "Oftentimes, abortion kills another woman [at the embryonic or fetal stage]. Our ability to be free and equal does not come from our ability to kill other weaker, vulnerable, unborn women. If we really care about women, why do we not fight for all women in all stages of their existence? It seems odd to me that we only fight for a specific group of women, and we tell some of them that they have the right to kill another woman if she gets in their way."

When I made that connection it was like a light bulb went on in her mind. Before leaving, she asked "Can I change my answer?" Walking back to the poll table, she signed the No side of our poll, and we cordially parted ways.

Many people think the same way Aubree thought before our conversation, and they just need someone to gently point out the flawed reasoning in their beliefs. When the truth is communicated in a loving manner, sometimes they are willing to change their views to fit the truth. This is encouraging to witness.

As Christians, learning how to communicate the truth to a watching world is crucial. We are told to "walk in wisdom towards outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person." (Col. 4:5-6 ESV). May we all be willing and ready to communicate the truth to a lost world.

Since traveling is no longer an option this spring, I have been working with the JFA team as we seek to reach people using other means. I have been helping JFA launch its Instagram account (@picturejusticeforall) while trying to get into conversations via direct message with people on that forum. I presented a portion of an online JFA interactive workshop this past week, and I'll also be helping with online training events in the coming weeks (see www.jfaweb.org/calendar). In addition, please go to my JFA page (www.jfaweb.org/rebekah-dyer) to find links to articles I have published recently with Human Defense Initiative and Merely Human Ministries.

We continue to engage in compassionate dialogue with the purpose of glorifying God and communicating to people the value and dignity in every human life. Thank you for your friendship, support, and prayers. It is much easier to do this work knowing I have people like you who have my back.

In Christ,

Rebekah Dyer

