

An Abortion Conversation in a Jacuzzi?

REBEKAH DYER'S JFA UPDATE

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Dear Friend,

I was not planning on talking about abortion. It was Labor Day weekend, and I was at the house of my brother's boss, "Jim." I had been trying to set up a meeting with him for awhile to discuss the possibility of financially supporting my work with Justice For All. I knew he was more on the pro-choice side but also knew he was really open to speaking with me. I had prepared notes for this particular conversation, and I had been planning on reviewing them prior to discussing my work. I thought we would meet at a coffee shop at some point. This is the story about how my plan for preparation quickly went out the door and how God made something special out of it.

With a drink in one hand, I had just sat down at the jacuzzi with my feet in the water, and Jim came over and mentioned the meeting about which we had had previously interacted. He said, "We should talk now!"

As I started to speak, he looked at me and said, "You know I'm pro-choice." For the next hour, I sat there with my feet in the jacuzzi talking about abortion with Jim as he relaxed in the water. But it wasn't just Jim and me. His daughter, son, wife, and my brother were all there listening in.

I had barely begun to describe my work when Jim interrupted and asked if he could play devil's advocate. He immediately brought up the hard cases.

Jim: What if there was a woman who's been raped? Not only that but her rapist was addicted to cocaine and now the baby will be born addicted? Do you think abortion should be an option for her?

In every conversation we have about abortion, there is a relational component that needs our careful attention. Many people that support legal abortion do so because they deeply care about people, and they think abortion prevents suffering and really helps women out of horrible situations. While I don't agree that abortion is a good solution to difficult, painful life circumstances, I think it's important to recognize the real compassion and concern pro-choice people have for others even if that compassion is directed towards the wrong solution—abortion.

Rebekah: I think that's a good question. I think my position is really hard to hear, and it even makes me uncomfortable because I realize there is no emotionally easy answer to this question. I think rape is horrible, and so often the man gets away with it, and that is a big problem. Women should be able to access all the care and support they need after experiencing sexual assault. If she ends up pregnant, either she gets an



An Instagram post on a recent article I wrote:
"Lessons from a Pro-Choice Friend"



abortion, keeps the child, or chooses adoption. No option is easy. I would want to do everything I could to help the woman except encourage her to kill another human being. As I've thought about my position on this, let's imagine a woman was raped and decided to keep the baby and then realized two years later that seeing the child just reminds her of the sexual assault. Would we say she could kill the two-year-old?

Jim: No.

Rebekah: So if the unborn is human like the two-year-old, and he is, then we shouldn't kill the unborn through abortion even in the case of rape. The man should be punished, and far too often the man gets away with the crime. I think that's an incredible injustice. Knowing we agree on that, why would we place capital punishment on the baby who did nothing wrong?

As we continued to talk, I was then able to present the Equal Rights Argument, one of the most powerful cases we can make against abortion.

Rebekah: The reason I think abortion should be illegal is because I believe in equal rights for all human beings. Every human being has a right to not be unjustly killed. Look around at us in this jacuzzi right now. All of us are different in many ways, but we deserve to be treated equally in that we have the basic right to live. If that's true, then we have to have something the same about us. The only thing that's the same is that we are human.* If that's true, then abortion should be illegal because the unborn are human just like us. I think abortion is often portrayed as a women's issue, but oftentimes abortion is killing another woman [a female unborn child in the womb]. Abortion undermines our equal rights. I think your life matters *now*: it's valuable and worthy of protection. That's been true, though, *from the moment you began to exist*. Abortion undermines our equal rights and says at some point someone could have killed you. It says some women can kill other women, and that is not empowering at all.

As our conversation came to an end, Jim and his daughter both told me that the equal rights point really made sense to them. The Equal Rights Argument is a powerful tool. I use it in nearly every abortion conversation I have on campus (or in the jacuzzi!). Equality is an important thing for so many and rightly so. When abortion is understood as an equal rights issue, I think more people will be willing to eventually change their position.

Our conversations have the ability to change minds. When minds are changed on this issue, we stop seeing others as burdens. When we don't see others as burdens, that opens up the human heart to have more love for more people. Having more love for our fellow human beings can lead to different decisions and different laws. And different laws can protect and recognize the right to life unborn human beings have had all along.

Thank you for your continued prayers and financial support for my work.

Rebekah

* I meant, "the only thing that's the same that doesn't lead to counterintuitive implications, such as animals deserving equal rights or infants not deserving equal rights, is that we are human."

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS (PARTIAL LIST):

August 29-31: *Abortion: Debate to Dialogue* Seminar and Outreach at Wichita State University (Wichita, KS)

September 20-22: *Abortion: Debate to Dialogue* Seminar and Outreach at Tarleton State (Stephenville, TX)

October 2-5: Two Seminars, a Presentation, a Workshop & Outreach at Colorado Christian University (Various Cities, CO)

October 24-26: *Abortion: Debate to Dialogue* Seminar and Outreach at University of Oklahoma (Norman, OK)

November 6: *Abortion: Debate to Dialogue* Seminar at Infusion Church (Escondido, CA)

November 7: *Abortion: Debate to Dialogue* Seminar at Mission Hills Church (San Marcos, CA)

See jfaweb.org/calendar for more events. Or contact me for the latest information about events.

