

DENTON BIBLE CHURCH

December 21, 2000

Dear Ministry Leader,

I must say when I first heard about the Justice For All Exhibit, I was very skeptical. My previous experiences with pro-life groups did not give me confidence that the love of Christ would be shown nor would God be glorified. So I adopted a wait and see attitude. When the first day rolled around and I went to campus to see the exhibit, I was overwhelmed.

The exhibit was surrounded with students asking questions. Students were grabbed with the content and the sheer reality of what they were seeing. Many just stood looking at the panels of each side, studying the pictures and statistics. The JFA staff and volunteers stood behind barricades where they would answer questions from students. When the conversations became student to student, the JFA staff would frequently back away and allow the students to wrestle with the issues presented by the exhibit. I learned later that this is part of their strategy.

Alongside the exhibit, pro-choice protesters handed out hangers and held posters claiming their right to their bodies. You could feel the spiritual oppression. Paul speaks in Ephesians 6 of the very same spiritual warfare. The protesters were the ones spewing hate while JFA was promoting forgiveness and grace. This sharp contrast prompted several protesters to put down their signs and speak with the JFA staff and volunteers about their own life experiences.

For three days at University of North Texas (UNT) and two days at Texas Woman's University (TWU), the JFA exhibit united the campuses, even our city, in conversation. There were many for and many against both the exhibit and its message that abortion kills babies. Newspapers for both schools still carry editorials about the exhibit, now over two months ago.

Denton Bible Church missed a huge opportunity to plan for this event and better capitalize on its potential for opening spiritual conversations with people. Although many good conversations have occurred with students because of the exhibit, we could have done much better at equipping our people beforehand on how to use the exhibit as a bridge to spiritual conversations and the Gospel.

I sent 10 teams of three to the campus the first night of the exhibit. Their sole purpose was to begin discussing the exhibit and get people's reaction to it. It was unnecessary to identify ourselves as a Christian group who were seeking respondents. We approached students as fellow students seeking to discuss the exhibit and their thoughts.

The response was overwhelming. Not one team returned that evening without some discussion about the exhibit. Many of these discussions centered around the struggle between life and choice. Although each team was able to share about God's purpose

and grace, we saw the greatest impact through the open discussions about spiritual issues. Many of these conversations have continued throughout the year.

JFA's web page (www.ifaweb.org) displays the actual panels of the exhibit. Many argue that some of the photos are only used to invoke the emotion and passion. Is it not the pictures of the Holocaust that speak to the atrocities that occurred beyond closed doors? In the same way the pictures displayed at this exhibit pulls the curtain back on the inhumanity of abortion.

I firmly believe the JFA exhibit is the best method for informing people about abortion and providing them a safe, graceful person to listen and answer their questions. The gospel is interlaced in almost every conversation. The spiritual warfare is like I have never experienced in my life. I am so convinced of the outreach potential that I am putting together a group of students to come to College Station (Texas A & M) the week of the event as a short-term mission trip.

I want to encourage you to prepare for the exhibit. You may or may not agree about the method or the message. My skepticism prevented me from properly preparing my people for the spiritual opportunities that came from the exhibit.

A short list of ideas includes: inviting the JFA staff to speak to your org/church, treating the event like a short term mission project, and involving medical professionals in your church. Our church volunteered with the logistics of the setup and tear down, as well as housing some of the team. The personal interaction with the JFA team during this time revealed their dedication and heart toward honoring God. In short, do anything to help get this exhibit to campus!

If you have any questions, please contact me at 940-380-0438 or timbur1@dentonbible.org. I am willing come and to spend time with you and your team to discuss the merits of your involvement.

Thank you,



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