

University of Texas-Austin Campus Pastor Mark Weighs in on the JFA Exhibit (via email)

Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2005 5:47 PM
cc: david@jfaweb.org
Subject: RE: mark with a crazy suggestion

hey britt,

...david lee (who i am copying on this message) came to talk to us at staff about 3 or 4 months ago....you know who i am talking about eh?



Pastor Mark right (in white)

at any rate, justin had him speak to us at staff. it was interesting because he had already asked me if i would let him have a friday night with hope student life and i was quite confused. on the one hand, i am RADICALLY pro-life....on the other hand my biggest strength is Evangelism and i don't want to unnecessarily offend. we have many new freshmen and some of them i know are coming from a liberal perspective on some of these issues. in the end, my better judgment won the day as i reluctantly (although he didn't know it at the time) let him come speak.

well, to get back to my story, when he spoke to the college pastors (there were the average 20-25 pastors there that week) i felt MUCH better but i was still scared. he did such a great job and was so gentle, loving and non-dogmatic. miles brandon, the episcopal student priest, asked him some pointed questions. he pointed out that it seemed like "shock tactics" and that he looked like he was trying to scare people etc. david answered these questions gracefully and lovingly to the extent that miles now appreciates david and his work tremendously....

so david came and spoke to hope student life. i didn't even advertise for fear of losing the audience! ("come to hope student life this week where we will be discussing murdering innocent children in the womb!") to make matters worse we had one of our biggest nights of the whole semester....i think we had right around 80 people there. he did such an amazing job that when it was over almost half not only said they really enjoyed it (i didn't hear ANYONE say otherwise!), they filled out cards to help when Justice For All returns in the spring.

britt....it was really one of the best things i have done in my short tenure as a college pastor. he grabbed all of our attention immediately and never lost it. i even went up to two of my "liberal" students (new kids) who i assumed were pro-choice and asked them if they were offended. they gushed: "Oh NO! we were just talking about that! we came in here tonight completely pro-choice and this has changed our minds! we didn't know at all, thank you so much for bringing him!" of course it has been 3 months so that is a paraphrase but it really does accurately reflect their attitude and their enthusiasm....

ok, so what's my point? i wanted to encourage you to take a night and give it to him. i can guarantee you won't be disappointed. these guys see themselves as missionaries to the unborn and their work is incredible. whenever i see big ugly pictures of aborted fetuses, i automatically imagine angry screaming pro-lifers who are anything but what i want to be. so when i first heard about justice for all, i was so afraid that this is what they were. after being a part of their last 3 exhibits in austin, i assure you they are the antithesis. they are soft-spoken. they are humble. they are gentle. they are VERY reasonable. they had all of the UTPD defending them (verbally) at the end of the week after seeing the way the pro-choicers handled themselves versus the justice for all crowd...if you could get him in to speak to your students, they would be blown away, YOU would be blown away. it was eye-opening even for me who has read tons on this subject and spent COUNTLESS hours debating it and discussing it since i was like 14 years old.

...let me know what you think....

in CHRIST,
mark

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