

JFA Exhibit Reflection

Thus far, my experiences at the Focus on the Family Institute, both in and out of the classroom, have had nothing less than a wonderful depth of richness. Our experience with the Justice For All project on the campus of Colorado State University was indeed no exception. Christ came from the Father full of grace and truth (John 1:14, NIV trans.). In the same way, I believe Justice For All gave us an opportunity to come into a new place in the name of both of these intangibles.

Excitement as well as sleep characterized my bus ride to Fort Collins, Colorado. With much enthusiasm, I can say that we were equipped wonderfully. Hearing from Scott Klusendorf, David Lee, and Steve from Stand to Reason only increased the ammunition I felt we already received from the audio tapes and reading that was required. Exposure to most of the arguments in favor of abortion and in opposition to the pro-life stance was invaluable, and receiving literature from the JFA staff that included training exercises and sharp responses to the most common comments and arguments was beyond helpful.

I felt sharpened and knowledgeable, and was quite excited to put the principles of conversation and questioning we had learned into practice; I was equally excited to whittle my interactions with people down to the main issue: "Is it human?" However, when we finally ventured outside to the actual exhibit in the main common area on campus, I realized it was game time, and my "big talk" was finally put to the test. I truly found myself still excited, but hit with the weight of reality.

Various conversations with people ensued. Most disturbing were people who were apathetic and refused to draw any conclusions because it was "too hard." One girl I spoke with admitted she was, "being a wimp," as she didn't want to invest in any convictions whatsoever. The sad part about having no convictions is that such apathy automatically ingratiates one with the negative side. Being neutral does not allow for some sort of wonderful state of blamelessness, but rather gives evil license to continue. If one is not for God, they are against him; in the same way if one is not against abortion, they are for it. I better understand now how God might want to spit us out of his mouth if we are neither hot nor cold (Revelation 3:16, NIV trans.).

One of the most rewarding and hopefully effective products of the JFA outreach was the opportunity to converse intelligently and from the heart with multiple young ladies for lengthy periods of time. Not only were we able to boil the issue down to when humanity begins and what exactly it is, but were able to converse graciously, challenging one another. Perhaps the most effective part of the outreach (besides the visual display itself) was the attitude of Christ-like love the JFA team stressed and themselves displayed. People wanted to come out and engage simply because the individuals out "on the job" wanted to simply discuss and dialogue, void of anger and argument.

Our outreach opportunity allowed me the chance to take hold of truth, realize its reality, and necessarily take action as a result. As a people-pleaser and despiser of conflict, it caused me to value truth above the comfort or offense of other people. After

my first two conversations with people, I realized that I would need to take my boldness pill and get over the fact that I was going to have to ask people questions that would make them uncomfortable. I realized how repulsive and unattractive *my own* apathy and inaction truly are.

Most important to the JFA outreach, I believe, is the opportunity for girls who have had abortions to receive help and healing through Jesus Christ. This is the only way. And this is absolutely necessary. In the surrounding audience, I found concern for the feelings of women who have had abortions and how the exhibit “is going to make them feel!” Having a woman there to counsel and support tearful young women, as well as references to the proper organizations that can help them is the most vital part of the exhibit. After all, these hurting women too deserve justice – that is the justice of the cross and the healing it can provide!

At the end of our second day, I was struck by the reality of the effects this organization has. In the midst of battling for equal rights for all human beings, JFA facilitated endless conversations of every sort. People who had faith were encouraged to continue in that walk. People without faith were encouraged to find it. People discussed worldviews, family, and convictions of every sort. Christ was shared. Christ was persecuted (also a blessing). Apathy was challenged. Apathy was changed into conviction. I walked away in admiration of David Lee, father of 14, and his obedience to the Lord in beginning and working for such a cause as this; then I found my admiration turned to the Greatest Father for the marvelous way that billions of seeds were sown, watered, or even grown. The obedience of Mr. Lee was honored ten-fold. While fighting for one cause for the name of Christ, more wonderful things happened than Mr. Lee probably could have even asked for or imagined (Ephesians 3:20, NIV trans.)!

By the time we loaded the buses to head back to Colorado Springs I felt thankful beyond reason. I had asked the Holy Spirit to guide me in conversation and allow me to share Christ and the power of his cross with someone – and it had happened. I had asked to feel sincere love – love that manifests itself in truth - for those I encountered and this had happened. I asked the Lord to help me love the Truth more than I loved myself – more than I loved myself being liked by the people I encountered.

I am more than pleased to have received the opportunity to work with such a wonderful organization and for such a cause. I would certainly serve with a JFA outreach again, and hope to serve the Lord they stand for even more.