



# Catherine's Conversations

March 2016



Dear Friends,

I've found that most college students I talk to know at least one woman who has had an abortion. For many, this deeply affects their position on the issue. Some are convinced abortion is wrong because of the negative impact it has had on their friends. Others equate condemning abortion with condemning the women they care about. Understandably, they don't want to condemn their friends, so the pro-choice view is the only one they feel they can embrace.

I had a sense the latter might have been the case for one pro-choice young man I recently spoke with at the University of Oklahoma. Here's how our conversation went...

## Don't Debate – Dialogue!

University of Oklahoma, Fall 2015

*At the poll table set up on the South Oval, Alex signed "Yes" to the question, "Should abortion remain legal?"*

Catherine (C): Hi! Thanks for signing our poll. What's your name?

Alex (A): No problem. I'm Alex.

C: Do you mind if I ask you more about your thoughts on this topic, Alex?

A: Sure, like what?

C: Well, first, do you think abortion should remain legal through all nine months of pregnancy?

A: No, not all nine months! I think it should only be legal up until the point that it's killing a human.

*I recognized that at this point that I could challenge Alex's view by making the case that every abortion kills a human. Something struck me, however, about his demeanor. Without being antagonistic, Alex seemed unusually confident and open about his views on abortion compared with most other college-aged men I meet. Also, he did not seem in a hurry to leave. I got the sense there might be something more personal behind his view. So, I asked a personal question.*

C: Can I ask, Alex, do you know anybody who has had an abortion?

A: Yeah. I had a friend in high school who did. She told me that if she had had the baby, it would have been a really upsetting situation for her and her family, so I think it was a good decision for her. That's why I think women should have the right to choose.

C: Wow. That must have been really hard for her.

A: Yes, I think it was. She didn't tell me about it until after the fact. It seemed like it was a hard decision for her, so that's why I think abortion needs to stay legal.

C: It's understandable to me that you would feel that way, given what your friend went through. Many women find themselves in *very* difficult situations when they're pregnant, and they need a lot of loving, practical support to make it through that time. Do you know how she's doing now?

A: No, we haven't kept in touch since high school.

*(continued on reverse)*

*(continued from front)*

*Alex and I then discussed the negative effects that abortion often has on women—and on men. I shared with Alex some resources for post-abortion healing, in case he learns of other friends who have been involved in abortions and are in need of support. He agreed it would be important for people who have been through abortion to know that compassionate, professional care is available to them.*

C: Would you be willing to think through a situation similar to your friend's, and tell me what you think of it?

A: Sure. What's the situation?

C: It's hypothetical, but, unfortunately, it's pretty realistic. Imagine there's a 15-year-old girl who, like your friend, finds out that she is pregnant. She and her boyfriend decide they'll raise the child together. Her parents, while hesitant, support the young couple's decision. Once the baby is born, though, and the bills and sleepless nights start adding up, the boyfriend bails on them. The girl's parents threaten to kick her and the baby out of the house if she doesn't "do something" to fix the situation. That'd be a tough circumstance for everyone, right?

A: Yeah, I'd say.

C: My question is, do you think the girl would be justified in *taking her baby's life* in order to solve this very difficult situation?

A: No way! She couldn't kill the baby!

C: I agree with you, so this might sound like a weird question, but... why not?

A: Because it's a human! It all comes down to when the baby starts to be a human.

*\*thoughtful pause\**

A: Do you have a brochure or something that has information about when the baby becomes a human?

C: Yes!

A: Can I have one of those? I have to go to class, but I need to look into that.

Alex left for class motivated to learn more about when the unborn becomes a human. At JFA, we teach all of our volunteers that it is critical for pro-life advocates to model genuine compassion for women who have had abortions, while at the same time advocating confidently for the rights of the unborn.

A good first step to accomplish this is to simply ask the person you're talking with if he or she knows someone who has had an abortion. Then, really listen, considering how you might feel if someone you loved went through a similar experience. Express your genuine concern, as well as the hope and resources available to post-abortive women (see: [www.jfaweb.org/links](http://www.jfaweb.org/links)). Ask God to give you wisdom about when and how to shift the conversation to the humanity of the unborn child. Then you might ask the person, "What if, moving forward, we didn't have to make a choice between a woman and her child? What if, as a society, we did a better job of caring for both of them?"

Please pray for Alex and for all of the people we talk to during JFA outreaches—that they will be both challenged and encouraged. Pray that they will become advocates for unborn children soon!

Thank you for your support and prayers!

In Christ,



Catherine Wurts