



"[You] educated me to the max." – Claire, seminar participant in Washington, DC, January 2016

"You Aren't Going Anywhere."

Dear Friend,

I watched as the standby passenger just in front of me gave the agent his ticket and was the last passenger to disappear down the jet bridge. He was going home, and I...I wasn't going anywhere.

Washington, DC, was about to be buried under one of the worst snowstorms in recent memory. The mayor of DC had declared a state of emergency...a day before any snow would fall. I had been notified about ten hours before that the Students for Life Conference I was in DC to attend had been cancelled, and I had hurried to the airport in the wee hours of the morning in hopes of flying standby back to Wichita to avoid getting stuck. That was Friday morning, January 22, the 43rd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* (1973).

I wasn't going anywhere. It was fitting, though, that I and many other pro-life advocates who had gathered in DC for the March for Life were feeling this way as we entered the 44th year of legal abortion in America. If you're like me, you take stock of where things are for the unborn child in America, and you conclude, candidly, "We aren't going anywhere." We seem to be stuck in a place where the right to first-trimester abortion is as firmly entrenched as it can possibly be in the laws and consciousness of the people.

What happened during the next 48 hours, however, provided a different sort of picture. It's a picture of hope and the progress that's possible when we take small steps with the opportunities God provides.

WHEN IN DOUBT, TAKE A POLAROID

I was standing in front of the gate agents already, so I asked them to rebook my flight, since it was certain that my Sunday flight would soon be cancelled. As I waited, I decided to liven things up a bit. I mentioned that I had a Polaroid camera. I took it out, turned it on, clicked the button, and the flash went off. A piece of white plastic emerged from the camera. The two gate agents, both women, were surprised and delighted with this "relic from the past." Our conversation went something like this:

"Now, when did the picture come into being?" I asked, as the image began to be visible.

"When the camera clicked the photo," the older of the two women responded.

"When the film was exposed, right?" I added. "It wasn't a picture only once we could see it... Now, when does a human being begin?" The older woman made a motion of sperm and egg coming together.

"I think you're right – at fertilization. The Polaroid is a good picture of the way humans begin: Even though we don't have the apparatus to see them at fertilization, they are there. Time and development make it possible for us to see them, but they were the same humans at fertilization that they are later on."

The gate agents didn't know this, but I was sharing a portion of the JFA seminar, a lesson we learned from [Richard Stith](#): The unborn isn't constructed from pieces like a car; the unborn develops from within, from fertilization, much like a Polaroid picture. The older gate agent was especially intrigued. She shared the picture with a third gate agent, a young man, and there was some discussion about the unborn and abortion. If I remember correctly, I also pulled up the new "See Baby" app on my phone and showed video



of the unborn child in the womb (www.ehd.org/apps). I gave the gate agents the Polaroid picture as a memento to remember the conversation by, and one of them took my business card. She was smiling.

Instead of walking away from that counter dejected, I walked away excited that God had given me a few free minutes to defend the unborn child in a way that was both natural and memorable.

SNOWED IN: A GREAT TIME FOR GETTING EQUIPPED TO SAVE UNBORN CHILDREN

A friend of JFA's, Kellie Taylor, had mentioned that her group of 46 high school students, college students, and chaperones from Phoenix would be snowed in with "nothing to do," so why not spend the day equipping the students to dialogue about abortion? That sounded like exactly the sort of thing that would redeem the time and effort I had put in to come to DC, so I texted Kellie to ask if there was a place for me to stay at the facility that was housing them. Happily, she was able to secure me a room, so I hurriedly positioned my car so that it would be stuck there when the snow fell. Then I joined Kellie's group for a subway trip to the Washington Mall and the March for Life.

The snow began falling during the March and kept falling through the night. We spent much of the next day on the *Abortion: From Debate to Dialogue* seminar, beginning at 10 AM. Kellie and the other chaperones were delighted. I "just happened" to have barely enough materials on hand for everyone. We punctuated the short lectures and interactive activities with meals and plenty of snow time.

Shortly after we concluded at 9 PM, one student was already creating dialogue on abortion with her pro-choice cousin using Facebook, one of the tools we had discussed in the seminar. A few others gathered around to discuss questions they still had about the pro-life position until "lights out" at 11 PM.

ONE SHOVEL-FULL OF SNOW AT A TIME

On Sunday afternoon, after the snow had stopped, I was about to leave the students to visit family before flying out on Tuesday. One problem: my car was buried in the snow. It took two hours for at least five high-school students, one neighbor, and I to dig the car out. I had underestimated the power of two feet of snow. One can only dig oneself out of that sort of barrier one shovel-full at a time. Even a snow-blower, which a neighbor was teaching one student to use, can only displace a little bit of snow at a time.

That's a good picture of the hope we have, though, since we're in the same sort of deep, intractable snow regarding abortion in our culture. We're not going anywhere. It's going to take many of us, one shovel-full at a time, just to help one carload of Americans, let alone a strong majority of Americans, get moving through the snowbank of thinking abortion is a necessary evil.

That's why, when I found myself stuck in DC, I took the opportunity God provided to talk to the gate agents about the unborn children we so often forget. A different kind of conversation. And that's why I took the opportunity to equip 38 students and 8 chaperones from Phoenix to start engaging their friends and relatives in ways that change hearts and save lives. A different kind of advocate.

Do you feel like we're stuck in the snow and "not going anywhere"? Remember that it's one shovel-full at a time that gets us out. It's one advocate, one conversation at a time. We at JFA are privileged not just to hand you a shovel, but to also stand by your side creating the conversations, one person at a time, that will make a difference for unborn children and their parents in the end.

Only by God's Strength,



Steve Wagner
Executive Director

JFA Ministry Notes

RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2016

Pray for our preparations and for good attendance during the events yet to come. Pray that many will stop during outreach, interested in discussing abortion. Pray that God will cause a love for every human being, born and unborn, to sink deep into the hearts of those with whom we have conversations and those we lead through our training program. See www.jfaweb.org/calendar for more events and details.

- Jan. 21-22: DC – Evangelicals for Life Conference & March for Life Events (Washington) *
- Jan. 23: DC – *Abortion: From Debate to Dialogue (ADD)* Seminar (Washington)
- Jan. 23-24: CA – Students for Life of America Conference & Walk for Life (San Francisco) *
- Feb. 19-25: GA – ADD Seminars & Outreach Events at Kennesaw State, Univ. of Georgia
- Mar. 4-8: CA – ADD Seminars and Outreach Events (Bakersfield)
- March: OK – ADD Seminars and Outreach Events – Details Still to Be Confirmed
- Mar. 31-Apr. 4: CA – ADD Seminars & Outreach Events (Fresno)
- Apr. 2-5: KS – ADD Seminars & Outreach Events at the University of Kansas (Lawrence)
- Apr. 8-9: PA – ADD Seminars (Pittsburgh)
- Apr. 16: KY – Workshop – Students for Life of America Leadership Summit (Lexington)
- April: CO – ADD Seminars and Outreach Events – Details Still to Be Confirmed
- May: CA – ADD Seminars and Outreach Events – Details Still to Be Confirmed
- June 20-21: LA – ADD Seminar & Outreach Events – Louisiana Right to Life PULSE Camp

* 3 staff members were present at various events in DC, and 2 were present in San Francisco.

RECRUITING INTERNS AND STAFF

Pray for our recruiting efforts. Catherine Wurts is hard at work to recruit at least one intern to be working in our office by September. We have already received \$2,300 of the needed \$8,000 for a four-month internship, so pray for both the funds and applicants. If you or someone you know would like to apply, go to www.jfaweb.org/internships or call Catherine at 316-683-6426.

RECRUITING MISSION TRIP PARTICIPANTS

Pray for our mission trips for 2016. While any of our outreach events can be turned into a mission trip (in which the participant handles all of his own housing, meals, and transportation), Tammy Cook is working to encourage people from all over the US to participate in our May 2016 mission trip in Los Angeles, CA. Contact Tammy (316-683-6426, www.jfaweb.org/mission-trips) for more information.

PRAY WITH US FOR GOD'S HELP

We are mindful that we need God's help for our small efforts to have any impact making abortion unthinkable. Pray that God would first cause our hearts to be humble and dependent on him, even as we work with great energy to make the most of the hours he gives us each week. Pray also for our families and local church communities, that we would give them the time and energy they deserve, even as we stand in the gap for the nearly forgotten unborn children being taken off to slaughter each day (Prov. 24:11-12).

- Steve Wagner, Executive Director

