

Dear Friends,

The last month has been a whirlwind as I have participated in five seminars, two workshops, three presentations, and six outreach days with Justice For All in and around Durango (CO), Albuquerque (NM), Denver (CO), and Greeley (CO).

Thank you so much for supporting my efforts and for being an encouragement to our whole team.



The University of New Mexico — March 2019

Surprised He Even Let Me Share — Greeley, CO (University of Northern Colorado)

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." - Proverbs 15:1 (NIV)

The truth of the proverb above has never been more clear to me than when I think about a conversation I recently had in Colorado. A young man was looking at our display, so I asked him what he thought.



New Mexico — March 2019

"I disagree with everything you guys believe," he said, "But I'm glad you guys are out here because I'm really mad today, and I want to argue." He was animated, and I felt incredibly intimidated.

"I actually haven't told you what I believe yet, so you don't know that we disagree. Besides I am pretty sure that we agree about a lot of things," I replied.

"Well I've read all about you guys, so I know about you, but there is a lot of garbage on the internet, so maybe I should let you tell me what you believe," he conceded.

"As I said, I think there is a lot that we agree on. For example, you and I both care about women. We both care about children. We both care about people in difficult situations, and neither of us wants people to suffer. Actually, you and I agree about a lot of things. I'm guessing we really only disagree about one thing, and that is this question: 'What is the unborn?' If the unborn is not a human being, and abortion does not kill a human being, then of course, abortion should be legal through all nine months for any reason because it would be a woman's right. But if the unborn is a human being, and abortion does kill a human being, then although there are some really difficult situations in which women find themselves, those situations can't ever justify taking the life of a human being. What do you think?"

Our conversation continued for a while longer. Eventually, he said that he had to get to class, but before he went he thanked me for my calm demeanor.

"I was really aggressive," he said. "You were really calm and kept the conversation friendly. Great job."

I was surprised. He was aggressive throughout the whole conversation. I never felt like his demeanor toward me softened. Yet even though he did not respond like it, he had noticed a difference in my response.

On campus especially, but also in my daily life, I am constantly reminded of the power of finding common ground. When I really listen and take the time to understand another person's perspective they are often much more open to hearing truth. That is probably why 1 Peter 3:15 tells us that we should always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks us the reason for the hope that is in us, but that we need to do so with gentleness and respect. A gentle answer turns away wrath and opens hearts and minds to the truth.

I Didn't See This Coming — Durango, CO (Fort Lewis College)

In Durango, Colorado, a young man came up and signed the poll-table. I asked him whether he thought abortion should be legal throughout all nine months of pregnancy, or just for a window of time in pregnancy.

“Definitely all nine months,” he said.

“Ok. I am really curious. Women get abortions for a lot of different reasons. How do you feel about a circumstance in which a woman wants a boy, but realizes that she is pregnant with a girl. Should she be allowed to get an abortion for that reason?”

“Yes,” he said emphatically.
“Women should have choices.”

“So you think that abortion should be legal through all nine months of pregnancy for any reason at all? Is that correct?”

“Yes.”



University of Northern Colorado — April 2019

At this point, I wanted to go talk to someone else. I did not want to talk to someone who was *that* staunchly pro-choice, but instead I said, “I agree with what you said a minute ago. Women should have the freedom to make choices. Freedom is so important. I am so glad that I live in a country where I have rights and freedom. There are many countries around the world where I, as a woman, would not have rights.”

“Now, this is going to sound strange,” I said, “But I am also glad that I do *not* have some rights. For example, I do not have the right to walk onto this campus with a gun and start shooting people. My rights end where your rights begin. So I think the question we have to ask with the issue of abortion is, ‘What is the unborn?’ If the unborn is not a human being and abortion does not kill a human being, then I think you are right. If that were the case, then abortion should be legal through all nine months for any reason. But if the unborn is a human being and abortion actually takes the life of a human being, then even though there are really difficult situations in which women find themselves, I don't think those situations can justify taking the life of a human being. What do you think? Do you think the unborn is a human being?” I pulled out the JFA brochure and showed him pictures of development.

“Yes. Yes, I think it is a human being. You're right. This is wrong. We can't kill human beings,” he said thoughtfully.

“Do you think that abortion should not be legal?”

“Yes. I don't think it should be legal.” He was staring at the pictures of development.

“The next page of this brochure contains some graphic pictures of what abortion does. Would you mind if I showed them to you?”

“No. That would be okay.” I opened the brochure, and we stood there in silence for a couple of moments. He was very thoughtful.

“This should never be legal,” he said.

Through these conversations I was reminded that I cannot really know another person or his beliefs until I take the time to ask questions and hear him out. I never know what God might do, even in the heart of a student that seems closed off.

— Kaitlyn Donihue