

One Teen's Story

"I Wanted to Have the Baby"

When I became pregnant, the father of the baby insisted on an abortion.

He was scared, because his parents had to get married with him when his mother was sixteen years old. My boyfriend always felt like his dad resented him for "tying him down." His father drank a lot, and would beat him and his mother and sisters. My boyfriend said he wanted to show his father that he could "do it the right way."

But I wanted to have the baby. I didn't know much about abortion, but as a Christian, I knew it was wrong. So I told my boyfriend that he could "get lost" and have no responsibility for the baby. If I felt that I couldn't handle the baby, I could give him up for adoption.

There was one problem: I was so scared! I needed the help of a professional, so like many other girls, I went to Planned Parenthood.

After an examination, I talked with a counselor and explained to her that I wanted the baby, but I was scared and that my boyfriend wanted me to have an abortion. She seemed to think that abortion was the wise choice. All she said was, "Well, remember that it's your body, and you have the final say about what happens. However, here's the phone to call and make an appointment for an abortion. The clinic is very busy so you should call as soon as possible." I told her I wasn't ready to jump that fast, and left feeling lonely and helpless.

I knew I couldn't fight against my boyfriend forever, and I was afraid to tell my parents. So, feeling hopeless, I made an appointment for an abortion.

I told the counselor I wanted to have my baby but my boyfriend wanted me to have the abortion. The counselor seemed quite upset with me and plainly told me that I was being "romantic," while my boyfriend was being "realistic." How could wanting to give birth to my baby be romantic? I knew it wouldn't be peaches and roses, but the counselor had no right to put me down like that, either. It seems to me that these people are so involved in fighting for abortions that they forget to look at the young girls' and their babies' needs.

Anyway, eight weeks pregnant, I had a suction abortion. About six hours after the abortion, I experienced severe cramps and almost passed out. I've never felt pain like that before—it was as if someone was on the inside of my stomach, slowly cutting it away with a knife. I finally rocked myself to sleep on my hands and knees. When I woke up, the pain was gone.

The second day I felt all right. But on the third day after my abortion, the pain came back, and I had a lot of bleeding and clotting. Nobody told me it would be that bad. I was told to expect some bleeding, which they gave pills for, and some cramps.

I was also told that for a couple of weeks I'd feel an emotional loss, but after that, I should be over my experience. If I wasn't, they said, I should seek further counseling, because normally these feelings of guilt, loss, etc. should be gone by then. Well, my symptoms weren't over, but there was no way I was going back to them for counseling.

A year later, I married my boyfriend, who also had horrible guilt feelings [about the abortion]. We have regretted it every day since it happened. We keep wondering what kind of child he or she was: a future President? Someone with the

answer to our energy problems? Quite on purpose, I got pregnant two weeks before we got married. I knew it was wrong, but the need for another child was so great that it was all I lived for.

About three months after we were married, I started changing emotionally, and could not stand having any kind of sexual relationship with my husband. I thought it was a hormone imbalance, due to my pregnancy.

When the problem didn't get better after the baby was born, and went on for another year, I went to talk to a Christian friend who was studying to become a marriage counselor. He said I was probably trying to punish myself for what I did, and that I couldn't accept God's forgiveness. It wasn't until two years later that I found out one of the major problems women face after an abortion is not being able to face sexual relationships. The emotional damage done by abortion goes so deep and into so many different areas that it is hard to understand.

I still have problems that need to be worked out. Nobody ever told me it would be like this. In fact, I thought I was abnormal until I read information from [a post-abortion support group], and realized that I'm not alone. Sad but comforting.

My husband has been great through all of this. Christ is teaching us so much, and because of what I went through, I have a "burden" to help fight this issue. Although I haven't told my parents about my abortion, I'll probably have to soon. I'm sure they wonder why I take everything about abortion so personally. I've already told my mother-in-law, and my husband is supporting me the whole way.

As a Christian, I know God was with me all the way, wanting to give me His strength to help me make it through my pregnancy. I was just too scared to reach out for His hand. I still should have gotten better professional help from those agencies. At the age of eighteen, the law says one is an adult. But emotionally, many eighteen-year-olds are not strong enough on the inside to stand up for what they really want.

I thank God with all my heart that He loved my husband and me and showed His love for us by giving us a second chance. We are blessed with three beautiful boys—I hope we can have three more!