



I grew up a minister's son in small-town America. I'd always been taught right from wrong and had done my best to be a good son. By the time I had entered my early teenage years, the MTV and Hollywood messages of rebellion and moral relativism had invaded my thought processes and affected my behavior negatively. I had gotten into trouble on several occasions and I began to think the world was out to get me.

Lost fatherhood

By Keith Ashley

All the while, I had somehow managed to remain a virgin and, if I'm honest about it, it wasn't necessarily by choice. When my father accepted a new ministry position I had to make some adjustments just before my senior year of high school, but everything seemed to get better when I met a girl at the new school and fell into puppy love. After a couple of months, the young woman began asking me if I was interested in going all the way. This was one of the worst decisions in my story. I had time to think it through and decided in favor of it.

Regrettable words

The next terrible decision I made involved a discussion regarding the results of our behavior. I distinctly remember that, during a minor argument, I had suggested that if pregnancy resulted from our actions, I preferred abortion over other options. To this day, I don't know why I said that. Most likely, I was lashing out in an attempt to hurt her feelings. What a terrible, thoughtless, miserable mistake that would turn out to be. Just a few weeks later it became a statement that I could not rescind.

She was pregnant and came to inform me. I was



Keith at age 19 with his brother Kaleb, age 18

in such shock that I just told her to take another test because the first one was probably wrong. We mulled it over separately for a couple of days and meanwhile, as I found out, her two older sisters had persuaded her to tell her parents and tell them she wanted an abortion. Her parents agreed to the abortion under one condition: that I never would know.

When I heard the news, God led me to do everything in my power to stop the abortion. I promised to fulfill my fatherly duties. I begged and pleaded with her to wait so we could at least talk about it. I even called two friends of ours to visit her late the night before. On my behalf, they asked her to delay, but even though she had given them the impression she was willing to wait, it was too late. She and her family had already made the choice and I was powerless to stop it.

Spiral into darkness

She called me several days later to tell me that she had miscarried a "blood clot." I knew in my heart that this was not true. The phrase "blood clot" rings eerily similar to the lie that abortionists tell women before the "procedure." We parted ways for good after that phone call.

Thus began my spiral into depression and darkness—and drug and alcohol abuse. For a time, I thought that if I only knew the truth, the pain would subside. But a year or so later, when an

Rock for Life Kansas

Rock for Life Kansas was approved as an official chapter of Rock for Life in October 2006. Under Keith Ashley's leadership, it has hosted two major concert and pro-life ministry events featuring local Christian acts, such as Abandon Kansas, Repentance, and Facing Determination.

It's also been privileged to minister to Kansas youth at several national touring concert events featuring bands like Decyfer Down, Pillar, Day of Fire and Seventh Day Slumber.

Rock for Life Kansas is based out of Wichita, the business location of the infamous late-term abortionist George Tiller. Rock for Life Kansas prays for and protests against Tiller with other groups, including the Kansas Coalition for Life, Operation Rescue and Silent No More Wichita.

"We look forward to the day that the good people of Kansas are no longer burdened by this disgrace. Tiller is breaking state and federal laws. More importantly, he is breaking God's supreme law," said Ashley. "We stand with American Life League's Rock for Life in the hope that America will return to being a place where all people born and preborn are protected by law and are welcomed into the world."



Jordan Heskett of Waiting 'til Dawn



Keith and Liz Ashley with their two children, one born and one preborn

encounter gave me truth about the abortion, my life and mentality did not improve. I had no interest in love or relationships for a very long time. The relationships I did get involved in were doomed from the start.

For this story to make sense you must understand that I did have hate in my heart for a time, but being able to forgive her wasn't the difficult part. In fact, I could not forgive myself. As a person of faith I should have known better than to involve myself in the immorality of premarital sex.

Furthermore, I certainly should have demanded the full protection of any child who would be conceived from our bad decisions. However, I was too far away from her—both physically and emotionally—and I could have stopped it if I'd only spoken up sooner.

My indecision and bad timing caused my loss of fatherhood. It cost my child's right to life.

Rescued by love

I spent several years in the darkness hiding from my guilt and shame. It was not until I reunited with my old friend Liz that I real-

ized I could be loved. Actually, Liz was born to a 16-year-old mother who never considered abortion an option. Her friendship, support and understanding pulled me through and got me back on the path to Christ's forgiveness, redemption and salvation. Then she became my wife.

It is by God's grace that I am here before you as a father to three children: one born, one preborn and one whom I will not know until eternal life. There was a time when Liz and I thought that we might never be parents, but God blessed us.

I have dedicated the rest of my life to the cause of helping to make sure that no one else has to go through the tragedy I suffered.

Therefore, I direct the Kansas chapter of Rock for Life, American Life League's pro-life youth outreach. I stand firm in my resolve that the option of abortion should not be available because it kills children, it is destructive to abortive parents, and it is certainly contrary to God's will.

I believe my story also sheds light on the lie that is abortion. "Pro-choicers," many declared feminists and abortionists would

have women believe that "abortion rights" or having a choice in the matters of life and death somehow helps women to achieve equality.

You will hear them say things like, "It is men's oppression and denial of 'reproductive rights' that keeps women from pursuing careers or lifestyle choices. This oppression forces women into the role of motherhood," or "Women are the ones who give birth so it is our bodies, our choice alone." Nothing could be farther from the truth. Abortion drives a wedge between men and women.

It is not the denial of access to abortion, but promiscuity that is the cause of unplanned pregnancy.

There is not one body—one person—involved in the abortion procedure. There are at least two and another who is involved emotionally. Aborting children does not make women equal to men; it has merely catapulted women and girls to the position of dominance over the lives of at least two other groups of people, men and children. Pro-choicers preach equality, but where were my rights as a father and where do the primary rights of innocent preborn people fit in with the scheme of women's liberation? One abortion immediately destroys at least three lives and possibly even generations that were meant to be. Therefore, I will be silent no more.

Keith Ashley's story is adapted from his February 2007 post on the Rock for Life web site. To join American Life League's youth group Rock for Life, go directly to www.RockForLife.org/join.

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