

## "I'm Not Pregnant"

*This is a testimony given by Jennie and Eddie Whelan at the Rappahannock Pregnancy Help Center's fall banquet. It shows the pain of pregnancy outside of marriage, the difficult decisions regarding the baby, and the blessing of right choices.*

*(Jennie's remarks are in black. Eddie's are in brown.)*

JENNIE: "I'm not pregnant," I told Eddie and myself. "Don't worry. I'm just under a lot of stress. That's why I am late." Scared of knowing the truth we avoided taking a pregnancy test.

Four months of this constant stress went by before Eddie and I realized that we couldn't avoid the truth. As much as we wanted, that wouldn't make it go away. I was pregnant and we both knew it, pregnancy test or no pregnancy test.

Eddie and I talked and talked about all of our options. Sadly we both thought of taking the easy way out of this situation: Abortion. This way our parents would never know and we could still live our lives the way we were now. It would be the easiest way out.

I would say about two days went by after making this decision before we realized how stupid and selfish we were being. There was a baby that we had made growing inside of me. Whether or not it was legitimate, it still was a baby. Eddie and I came to our senses and decided that we could not hide from our mistake. I told my mother first.

She reacted a lot better than what we expected. The first thing she did was to buy me a pregnancy test. The test only revealed what I already knew was true. After this she calmly told me that she was sorry. She was going to make me do what she knew I didn't want to do. She told me that we had to do this, because my father could not know that I was pregnant. She told me that he couldn't handle it and that it would kill him. She knew exactly which buttons to push to make me give in.

The appointment was made for me at the abortion clinic and my mom and sister brought Eddie and I to the clinic. I prayed the entire trip there that I wouldn't have to do this. My mother and sister assured me that this would be the best thing for me, even though I kept telling them that I wasn't sure it was.

Eddie was there and told me that I didn't have to do anything that I didn't want to. Then the doctor came out and said that he could not do anything until I stopped crying. I took this as a way out and just kept on crying. The nurse came and gave me an examination which revealed that I was too far along to have an abortion. Eddie and I breathed a sigh of relief. It was God who helped me when I couldn't be strong and stand up to my mother to do what I knew was right. At this point we came from the abortion clinic and decided to be open with the rest of our family. We told Eddie's mom and dad first.

EDDIE: We felt safe in telling my parents about the baby only because we knew abortion would not be an issue. But to tell them about the pregnancy gave us an overwhelming feeling of guilt for what had happened between Jennie and I. The lies and deceit had finally caught up with us, so when we finally shared the news I could only cry.

JENNIE: After Eddie and I told his parents, the only person left to tell was my dad. My mom was kind enough not to make me tell my dad. She did it for me. My dad didn't die, but rather handled it much better than was to be expected. Both of our parents got together to have a group discussion on the matter. Though nothing was decided we talked and received everyone's opinion on what we should do.

The next step was to go to the doctor to see how far along I was and how the baby was doing. At this point I felt better. I felt like we were actually getting somewhere ? until I went to the OB/GYN. The first thing my mother told the doctor was that I was giving the baby up for adoption. The doctors response was that half the women that say they are going to place the baby in adoption end up not. My mom said, "Well, she is too far along to have an abortion, so all we can do is see what happens." Then the doctor informed her that he could perform the abortion in his office, even though I was 19 weeks pregnant.

This put us right back to square one. I knew she truly wanted what was best for me and my life, and knowing the chances of Eddie and I giving the baby up for adoption she felt that abortion was the best solution.

EDDIE: With all the back and forth decisions and Jennies' parents not understanding the way we felt about abortion my frustration quickly became bitterness towards them which put more of a strain on Jennie and on our relationship.

JENNIE: Without my mother knowing I was able to find counseling through Eddie's church, NLCC. They in turn advised me to talk to Kathy Fournier, a counselor with the Rappahannock Pregnancy Help Center. Only the strength of these people gave me the confidence to stand up for what I knew was right. With their help I was able to tell my mom that I did not want to and was not going to have an abortion.

With continued counseling we realized that we would not be able to put our baby up for adoption. It's been two years now. Littlest Eddie is the joy of our life. With the help of our parents, we waited until we were both ready for marriage. This past month Eddie and I were able to reach this dream, as we exchanged vows on October 3rd.

Eddie and I realize that our "happy ever after" story isn't the normal scenario. Yet the stress, feelings, and emotions are all the same for girls in crisis pregnancies. I couldn't imagine going through anything harder. But God used people from the crisis pregnancy center to help me make what was not the easiest decision, but the right one. Because they helped me to make the right decision little Eddie has blessed my family and helped them to open their eyes and change their views on life.

EDDIE: We knew from the beginning that abortion was not right but when we were tested to act out our belief I am thankful that there were these people to help back us up:

- For God being in our lives and helping us in our struggles
- My Family- Who first educated me about abortion
- My Church- Who stood up and pronounced being prolife
- Our Counselors from the Rappahanock Pregnancy Help Center and
- Bethany Christian Services who walked with us during our crisis.