

# It Was My Abortion Too

## A Father's Perspective

*by Reg Platt*

Most people don't think men are affected by abortion, but I know from personal experience that it's not true. I lost my only child to abortion, and while it took me a while to realize it, that event nearly shattered my whole life. It wasn't until I confronted the effects of abortion in my past that my life started to heal.

### **“Please Don't Do This.”**

The first abortion I was involved with happened in the spring of 1976. I was nineteen, working at a theater, and in love with a beautiful actress. Just weeks after we got married, we found out that she was pregnant. I was delighted.

I was delighted, but she felt she wasn't ready for a family. So she told me matter-of-factly that she was going to get an abortion. Inside, I screamed, “Please don't do this!” But instead of saying it out loud, I told her, “It's your body. I'll support your decision.” It was cowardly of me, but I knew deep down that if I challenged her on this, our marriage would not survive. I reassured myself that we had done the right thing.

That summer I fell into a deep depression. My wife and I started criticizing each other for the silliest, smallest things, but we never talked about the abortion. Within a matter of months, our relationship had deteriorated so much that we separated. After we broke up, she got pregnant by another man, and indifferent to the whole situation I drove her to get a second abortion.

### **From Denial to the Truth.**

I spent fifteen years ignoring my feelings and wondering why my life was so messed up. I felt guilty, but I didn't know why. I was angry with my ex-wife, with myself, with God, and even with my family and friends. Most of that time I couldn't hold a job for longer than six months. I medicated my grief and pain with drugs and booze.

I resorted to meaningless sexual encounters. I was numb to what was going on in my soul. I turned deeper into pornography as a way of dealing with my sexual frustrations, but it only made me more isolated.

Then a day came when I was taking a shower and I started thinking back to my life in 1976. I realized that if we had not chosen abortion, my child would soon be turning sixteen. Then I realized that my child wasn't turning sixteen because—well, because I had given in. I had stood by while my wife got an abortion. I had done nothing to save my child. I wept at the realization. And I wept because I would never meet that child or have another one of my own.

I had hit a turning point: admitting to myself that I had abandoned a child who I was supposed to protect. At the same time, I felt deep loss and powerlessness.

The pain I felt after participating in my abortion was different from a woman's pain, but it was just as real. And I say *my abortion*, because the entire point of an abortion is to remove a child from someone's life. My child had been removed, with my consent—albeit against my better judgment. So *it was my abortion too*. I had a hole in my life the size and shape of a child I'd never held, never kissed, and never met. It still hurt and haunted me, but I had taken a first step by accepting what I had done.

Now I could start to heal.

### **No More Running Away.**

I started seeking out healthy relationships and I got away from drugs. I returned to the Church, and my new wife, Susan, converted. Then together, we got involved with the pro-life movement. I was sure at this point that the problems caused by my abortion experiences were over, so I was reluctant to go on an “after abortion” retreat. I feared that the women at Rachel's Vineyard, the ministry for victims of abortion, would not accept me. In fact, they were glad to learn that a man's experience of abortion goes beyond just feeling relieved. Once I realized they didn't reject me, I entered fully into the retreat.

For many years, I had been mad at myself for being a coward. Finally, at this point, I decided that I was going to offer this anger and shame to God and ask for his forgiveness—formally, not just in passing. I decided to do this in Confession and talk about it with God in Adoration. When I did, my soul felt lighter, and I felt willing to believe that I was worthy of love.

The next big step in my healing happened through Project Joseph, a pro-life ministry where men help other men confidentially to find God's forgiveness. The men I met at this next retreat had all experienced similar grief and guilt as me. They helped me open up about how powerless and humiliated I still felt. With their help and God's, I finally realized that the Father's love fully restores me. I finally laid down the burden I was carrying.

### **A New Man, Looking to Jesus.**

Each of the 60 million abortions that have occurred in the United States since 1973 had at least one man involved. This is why I now work to help men who think they are alone in the pain and remorse of an abortion's aftermath. Christ wants us *all* back with him, forgiven and at peace.

My experience has taught me that we have to help each other—because if we don't, no one else will. At some point we each come to realize our mistakes. The guilt that accompanies this can make us pull away from each other. That makes it easier to fall into sin. But once we are able to admit that each of us is part of a world full of sinners looking to Jesus, we can realize we are not alone.

Because I allowed the Lord's forgiveness and grace into my life, I have been changed into the “new man” I am today—someone who has learned, accepted, repented, and turned toward God. The old man—the one who forced, suggested, paid for, or drove to an abortion; the man who fought it and lost; or the man who gave in and stood by—that man is gone. In Christ, all things have been transformed and made new (2 Corinthians 5:17).

*Reg Platt is the facilitator at Project Joseph Dallas.*

*For information about starting Project Joseph in your diocese, email [healing@projectjosephdallas.org](mailto:healing@projectjosephdallas.org). You can also call 469-416-2101 to make a confidential inquiry.*

**[sidebar]**

### **Support Men and Women in their Recovery**

For Reg Platt, recovering after participating in an abortion was a process with many layers. One of the deepest layers involved praying about and talking with God about what happened. Through our Partners ministry, *The Word Among Us* provides prayer and healing resources for men and women who have gone through abortions.

Reg shares some of his story in one of those resources: *After Abortion: A Prayer Booklet for Men*, a booklet filled with reflections and exercises to bring the reader more deeply in touch with the Father who offers mercy—and who is mercy itself. More than 10,000 copies of the booklet and 100,000 copies of a companion booklet for women have been distributed to date, and both can be downloaded for free at [wau.partners.org](http://wau.partners.org).

Please help us provide more spiritual resources to men and women dealing with an abortion by donating to our Partners Ministry.

- We reach 5,000 pregnancy help centers and healing ministries
- \$25 sends them two subscriptions of *The Word Among Us* for a year
- **Will you help us expand our reach?**

Please consider becoming a Partner. You can make a tax-deductible donation at **[wauptners.org](http://wauptners.org)** or by calling 1-800-775-9673. Checks can be mailed to The Word Among Us Partners: 7115 Guilford Drive, Suite 100, Frederick, MD 21704.