

ABORTION, REASONS TO REFUSE

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

The following article came to me recently and I contended that I should pass it on. It has been slightly edited and a conclusion added.

The Smell of Rain

A cold March wind danced around the dead of night in Dallas as the Doctor walked into the small hospital room of Diana Blessing. Still groggy from surgery, her husband David held her hand as they braced themselves for the latest news. That afternoon of March 10, 1991, complications had forced Diana, only 24 weeks pregnant, to deliver Danae Lu Blessing early.

At 12 inches long and weighing only one pound and nine ounces, they already knew she was perilously premature. Still, the doctor's soft words dropped like bombs. I don't think she's going to make it, he said, as kindly as he could. "There's only a 10 percent chance she will live through the night, and even then, if by some slim chance she does make it, her future could be a very cruel one." Numb with disbelief, David and Diana listened as the doctor described the devastating problems Danae would likely face if she survived. She would never walk, she would never talk, she would probably be blind, and she would certainly be prone to other catastrophic conditions from cerebral palsy to complete mental retardation, and on and on. "No! No!" was all Diana could say. She and David, with their 5-year-old son Dustin, had long dreamed of the day they would have a daughter to become a family of four. Now, within a matter of hours, that dream was slipping away.

Through the dark hours of morning as Danae held onto life by the thinnest thread, Diana slipped in and out of sleep, growing more and more determined that their tiny daughter would live, and live to be a healthy, happy young girl. But David, fully awake and listening to additional dire details of their daughter's chances of ever leaving the hospital alive, much less healthy, knew he must confront his wife with the inevitable. David walked in and said that we needed to talk about making funeral arrangements. Diana remembers, "I felt so bad for him because he was doing everything, trying to include me in what was going on, but I just wouldn't listen, I couldn't listen. I said, "No, that is not going to happen, no way! I don't care what the doctors say; Danae is not going to die! One day she will be just fine, and she will be coming home with us!"

As if willed to live by Diana's determination, Danae clung to life hour after hour, with the help of every medical machine and marvel her miniature body could endure. But as those first days passed, a new agony set in for David and Diana. Because Danae's under-developed nervous system was essentially raw, the lightest kiss or caress only intensified her discomfort, so they couldn't even cradle their tiny baby girl against their chests to offer the strength of their love.

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