

RAPED & Pregnant

Three Women Tell Their Stories

Rape is understandably difficult to talk about—especially for the women who are the victims. Yet because it's so often used as a reason for abortion, we need to take a closer look.

Pregnancy due to rape is very rare, but sometimes it happens—what then? Should the woman have to carry the child to delivery? What about the child—how could he live knowing how he came to be? Wouldn't abortion be the easiest solution?

In this article we bring you the stories of three women who faced those questions first-hand. All three were raped and became pregnant, but each chose a different path. We greatly appreciate their willingness to be vulnerable and share their lives with us.

But first, let's examine the subject of rape itself.

The next day my parents returned, and as Daddy walked in the door he said, "Honey, we're gonna take that baby home. I don't care what people say or think, we're gonna stand with you." I had already chosen a name, so I put little Patrick in the back of the car and we drove off.

But at home, other members of the family were strongly opposed to me keeping Patrick, and they let me know their feelings in no uncertain terms. I stayed for 9 months, and a strong bitterness took over me. I held so much unforgiveness—toward the man who raped me, and toward the people telling lies about me. Their damaging words went deep into my spirit. I just couldn't live under the stories being told, so I moved to California, and I dove into drugs and alcohol. Suddenly, all the things that were said about me were coming true.

When Patrick was 2½, I met Harris—the answer to a prayer. As I left that home for unwed mothers, I had looked into the sky and prayed, "God, if there is a God, please—if I ever get married, let that man love this baby more than he loves me." And that's exactly what happened. Harris fell in love with Patrick, and they did all the typical father-and-son things. When Harris finally asked my father for my hand, he asked first for Patrick, and then for me!

But our marriage was very difficult. Quite frankly, I hated men. I got even deeper into drugs and drinking, and what was left of my life quickly crumbled. Finally, after my third or fourth drug overdose, God got through to me. I knew I needed to give my life to the Lord, and I cried out to God.

God's mercy was extended to me in the most wonderful way. My life completely turned around. One day I was a drug crazed person, and the next I was in love with Jesus and starving for the Word of God. About a year later Harris also gave his life to God, and our whole family went through a tremendous healing. We had two more sons, and all of them now know and love the Lord. There have been ups and downs to say the least, but through it all God has shown me His tender mercy and forgiveness.

Patrick is now 22, and I thank God that abortion was illegal when he was conceived. If it had been available, I don't know for certain what I would've chosen, but I'm glad I didn't have the option. I pray for the day when it will again be outlawed. I guess both Patrick and I are classic examples of God's mercy and grace, and what He can do in the case of rape.

Every life is of immeasurable value and importance, no matter what the circumstances. God gives each person something unique to contribute, and when even one life is lost, we all lose something. If Patrick wasn't here, there are many people who's lives would have suffered, including mine. It was Patrick who challenged and helped me to truly forgive his father.

I now work as a counselor at a crisis pregnancy center, and many times a young lady will say, "But you just don't understand! How could you ever understand?" I've been able to share my testimony, how God took even a rape situation and turned it for His glory. If He could do it for me, He certainly can do it for anyone else! It hasn't been easy, but I'm so grateful for how God has restored my life.

God has blessed me with a wonderful wife and we sense His call to the mission field. God has helped me go beyond just forgiving my father—I truly love him. I wish with all my heart that I could meet him. Perhaps this testimony will even come into his hands, and he'll get in touch with me. My prayer is that he too will come to know the power of God's love to restore a broken heart.

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Rape, Pregnancy, And Abortion

We've all heard the argument that abortion must remain legal so rape and incest victims aren't forced to go through unfair pregnancies. We're often led to believe that a great number of abortions are done for these reasons. But the abortionists aren't really concerned with what's best for the victims of sexual assault—they're simply trying to manipulate a very emotional subject to their own advantage.

Not too long ago, a pro-abortion advocate gave a lengthy justification for abortion based on rape. When his pro-life opponent asked, "Let's say we allow abortions for rape or incest—would you then agree to end those performed strictly for 'convenience'?" The person still insisted that abortion should be legal for everyone, quickly showing that rape was *not* the issue.

We don't want in any way to minimize the trauma, agony, and injustice of rape, or a woman's tremendous difficulty if faced with pregnancy. But a very distorted picture has been presented to the public, and while the emotional impact is great, the real facts have been conveniently forgotten.

Conception From Rape

Despite what you may have heard, pregnancy due to rape is *extremely rare*. A one-year study in Washington, D.C., showed only one pregnancy in more than 300 rape cases. A similar Chicago study revealed no pregnancies resulting from rape in the past nine years.¹ Overall, less than 1% of the women who are raped become pregnant.² Only one out of every 25,000 abortions is performed because of a pregnancy occurring from rape. More than 98% of all abortions are done simply because the mother does not want to have the baby.³

Born In The Nick Of Time

The rape argument is not a new arrival. In fact, it was this very issue that led to the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. The case of a woman who allegedly became pregnant following a gang rape was brought to the Supreme Court. Denied an abortion under Texas law, abortion advocates rallied around her, helped her appeal to the Supreme Court, and won.

Incidentally, most people are unaware that the ruling came too late for Jane Roe—she had already given birth, and the baby was put up for

adoption. That child, alive today, would surely have something to say to the Supreme Court!

Although some people feel it's reasonable to allow abortion in the cases of rape and incest, most haven't thought the matter through. If asked "Should an innocent human being be killed for the crime of another?" there's little doubt the overwhelming response would be, "Of course not!" But through the "justification" of abortion for rape, the floodgates of abortion have opened, and the blood of over 16 million innocent children has been poured out.

Who Pays?

For too long rape has been used to justify abortion and side-step the real issue: **is it ever right to take an innocent human life?**

No matter how unfair or horrible a situation might be, we can *never* justify killing another innocent human being to try to alleviate mental or emotional anguish.

A woman who's been raped has been cruelly victimized. If she ends up pregnant—is it fair to her? No, it isn't. What then? Kill her child? Will that make things fair again? No.

It is unjust for a woman to be pregnant from a rapist, but it is a *greater* injustice to kill the blameless child. Unfortunately, in this case, injustice cannot be avoided. We must do our best to redeem the situation—forgiving the guilty, and helping the innocent.

As far as the well-being of the rape victim, the emotional trauma she's been through is not lessened by abortion—it's only compounded by another experience of violence. One study states, "In the majority of these cases, the pregnant victim's problems stem more from the trauma of rape than from the pregnancy itself."⁴

We must extend God's love for the rape victim, offering her the compassion and support she so desperately needs. In the rare cases when pregnancy occurs, that support and reassurance is all the more vital. But we must also expose the lies that tell a woman that abortion is the easy way out. In the words of one experienced counselor, "Abortion does not un-rape a woman."⁵

Written by Sharon Bennett
Researched by Bob Miller



Patrick DeLeeuw

I was 18 when I learned I'd been conceived by rape. My first reaction was shock—I'd known my mother wasn't married, but I always thought she entered the relationship willingly. As a young boy I'd felt a subtle hatred for my real father, since he had left me and my mom. I felt hurt and rejected by him. Learning the truth quickly rekindled that hatred, and my heart

burned with bitterness toward him.

It was only after surrendering my life to the Lord that I found peace with who I am, and how I came to be. That peace came as I forgave my father, just as Jesus has forgiven me.

As a child of rape, I have a unique outlook on abortion. If abortion had been legal when I was conceived, I would not be alive. I'd never have had a chance to love and give of myself to others. I've had wonderful opportunities to share my testimony, too. Whenever someone says, "Well, what about rape?" I have the perfect answer!



"I cried so hard and so long, and almost regretted my decision. But for her sake I knew I'd done the right thing. I can live with the fact that I've been raped, but I couldn't live in peace if I had killed my child."

Kay Zibolsky

It was late, and I tried to hurry through the snow that January evening. Halfway through a tunnel-like underpass one block from home, a man jumped from the darkness and threw me to the ground.

"Don't make a noise or I'll kill you." I lay terrified as he ripped off my clothes and raped me. As a slim sixteen-year-old, I was no match for him. He threatened to come after me if I told anyone, so I lay motionless in a cloud of pain and nausea as he disappeared into the night.

Our house was empty, and I rushed to cleanse myself of the horrible dirty feeling that clung to me. I threw away my torn clothes, immersed myself in a hot tub, and scrubbed till my skin ached. By the time Mom got home from work, I was huddled silently in bed. I didn't dare tell anyone what happened.

worked hard to support us. She had no idea what I was really going through, and her words couldn't comfort my hurts and fears. We'd never been very close, and I felt increasingly alone.

Surprisingly, the nightmares diminished as I felt the baby move. This new life brought the first glimmer of healing from the rape. As the months passed, I started to think this child would fill the void that had ached inside me for so long. I eagerly waited for the day when I'd hold my baby in my arms.

After 36 hours of labor, Robin Lynn was born. She was perfect and beautiful, and nothing could dim the love I felt for her! Mom and I worked opposite shifts at a factory, and we shared the responsibility for Robin. But I wasn't prepared for how difficult it was—the frequent feedings, the mountain of diapers, and her wakefulness at night when I was exhausted from a long day of work.

1. Basile J. Uddo, "On Rape, Incest and the Right to Life," *The Human Life Review*, Vol. X, No. 3, Summer 1984, p. 58.
2. "What the Public Really Thinks About Abortion," Concerned Women for America, 122 C. St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.
3. Dr. & Mrs. J. C. Wilke, *Abortion: Questions & Answers*, Hayes Publishing Co., 1985, p. 147; "What the Public Really Thinks About Abortion," Concerned Women for America.

4. Mahkorn & Dolan, "Sexual Assault & Pregnancy," *New Perspectives on Human Abortion*, University Publishers of America, 1981, pp. 182-199.
5. Curt Young, *The Least of These*, Moody Press, 1983, p. 208.

The next year, my mother was hospitalized for a nervous breakdown. Since I couldn't care for Robin alone, she was placed in a foster home. I was allowed to visit on weekends, but the home was so far away, I couldn't go very often. Every time I did see her, she had changed so much it frightened me. I was afraid she'd be taken from me forever, so I stole her away myself.

I was too young to understand the emotional trauma Robin was going through, but a social agency helped me understand how hard it all was on her. I soon realized that the best thing I could do for Robin was to give her up. The thought tore my heart in two, but I knew nothing else would be fair for her.

My uncle knew a couple who'd tried for years to have children. If I could give them the joy of a daughter, and at the same time give Robin a stable family, I'd be selfish not to.

Robin was 18 months old, and I met her new parents on Mother's Day. We gathered her belongings, and with tears streaming down my face, I kissed her good-bye. I knew I'd never see her again unless she came to find me.

That was the hardest thing I've ever done. I cried so hard and so long, and almost regretted my decision. But for her sake I knew I'd done the right thing. I loved her enough to give her up, and I've had peace in my heart about it all these years.

In 1979, my life had a fresh beginning through the transforming power of Jesus' love. I learned that God wasn't to blame for man's wrongful acts, and that He had loved me all along despite the horror that befell me. Only then was I released from the hatred for the rapist that bound my soul. When I finally understood that Christ died for him too, and loves

him just as much as He loves me, I was able to forgive and even pray wholeheartedly for the man who attacked me.

The years of separation never dimmed my love for Robin, and hardly a day went by that I didn't long to hold her again in my arms. Once I found the love of Christ, I prayed with all my heart for Robin to somehow find Him, too.

Last spring, Robin and I saw each other for the first time in 26 years. I can't tell you the tremendous joy and excitement that was in my heart. We were all smiles, and couldn't stop looking at each other. Now we're working on building a relationship at a pace we both can handle. In all honesty, it's been difficult for her to learn about her real father—but that doesn't mean she wishes she'd never been born! It's interesting that the first thing Robin said when we met was, "Boy, am I glad you didn't get an abortion!"

I thank God abortion wasn't legal years ago. As hard as it was to give Robin up for adoption, I'm at peace knowing I chose what was best for her—not necessarily what was easiest for me. I can live with the fact that I've been raped, but I couldn't live in peace if I had killed my child.

I don't agree with those who advocate abortion for rape or incest. One violent, cruel act doesn't justify another. Our laws don't condemn rapists to death, so it's insane that we'd issue a death sentence for an innocent baby.

Robin is no different and no less valuable than any other human being. In fact, I've often imagined Robin and my other daughter (born through marriage) standing together before a gathering of all the pro-abortion people. I would ask the crowd to decide which one should live: "Does one deserve to die because of the way she was conceived, because of the sin of her father?"



"I felt an emptiness that nothing could fill, and quickly discovered that the aftermath of abortion continued a long time after the memory of the rape had dimmed."

Jackie Bakker

When I was 19, I was raped at knife-point in Hollywood, California. I felt dirty, used, and stripped of all dignity. Less than 1% of the women who are raped become pregnant, but I was one of those women. At first I went through a time of denial, but as my body went through changes, I realized I couldn't cover up the fact any longer—I was pregnant. I thought there must be an easy way out!

I'd just been interviewed for an airline stewardess position. But even more than my career being jeopardized, I couldn't stand the thought of carrying the child of the man who raped me.

When my sister mentioned abortion, it sounded like the perfect solution. Abortion was still illegal, but my sister made the arrangements. I met a man in Griffith Park, who took me blindfolded to a doctor's office. But the doctor wouldn't do an abortion because I had such a bad case of strep throat—if the infection went into my uterus, I could die. So he told me to go home and live with the fact that I was pregnant, and somehow I'd make it through.

I later found a very caring doctor who helped me see that every life was valuable. I began feeling love and acceptance for my child, especially as I felt my baby moving. I became excited about the new life within me and almost forgot how it had begun.

When I finally told my parents, my dad was in shock that I was pregnant, especially from a rapist. A family doctor got my dad in touch with Planned Parenthood, where I was told that abortion was "the only solution." They offered no alternatives. I believed them when they said my nightmare would be over and I could go on with life after the abortion as if "nothing ever happened."

My parents contacted the District Attorney to testify of the rape so I could get a legal abortion. By the time the D.A. approved it I was 22 weeks pregnant, and had decided I really wanted to keep my baby. But I felt a tremendous pressure from all sides—especially to please my parents—and I finally gave in.

I'll never forget the day my parents left me in the hospital. I felt alone and empty and forgotten. I wanted to get away, to run—but there wasn't anywhere or anyone to run to. My heart was torn in half—I knew my baby was about to die and I was allowing it, yet I was so afraid of displeasing my parents.

The doctor told me to lie still as he shot the saline solution into my abdomen. I lay there wishing I was dead. I went into labor, and allowed myself to almost believe I would deliver a live baby. No one said a word about what labor would be like. For 18 hours I

struggled through the contractions alone. Then, with only a young nurse's aid standing next to me, I delivered my little baby girl into a bed pan. She was fully formed and perfect, but she was still and silent. I was shocked as I looked at what people told me was just a blob of tissue. It was as if I was waiting for her to start crying, still hoping she was alive.

I felt an emptiness that nothing could fill, and quickly discovered that the aftermath of abortion continued a long time after the memory of the rape had dimmed. For the next three years I experienced horrible depression and nightmares. I'd dream I was giving birth, but then they'd take my baby away from me. I'd hear her crying and I'd search, but I couldn't find her anywhere. I'd just hear her cries echoing in the distance.

As time went by the memories seemed to fade. I buried them deep within and hardened myself to the pain. Contrary to what every one had told me, the abortion was much harder to deal with than the rape. The rape was a violent crime against me, an innocent victim. The abortion was the violent murder of my child, and I was a willing participant. I tried to tell myself I had a good reason for abortion—after all, I was raped. But it hurt too much to think about, so I buried the truth.

I later married and had two boys. When my youngest was three months old, my husband and I came to know Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. A healing took place in many areas of my life, but the pain of my abortion was still buried deep. I wouldn't admit it had affected me. Although I had decided I'd never have another abortion, I still wouldn't deny others that choice. But every time it was mentioned, I ached inside. I didn't want to face it.

A few years later I was diagnosed with cervical cancer and needed a hysterectomy—shattering my dreams of ever having a little girl. At last God removed the make-shift bandage I had placed over the wounds in my heart, and He brought the hurts, pain, and grief over the death of my daughter to the surface. I felt my guilt and the deep, deep wound that needed healing.

At first I was angry—angry that I had allowed myself to have an abortion, and thinking that God was punishing me for it. It was hard to face up to my own responsibility—ultimately, I was the one who chose to go through with the abortion. There are consequences to sin. We do reap what we sow. But as I confessed my sins, God was faithful and just to forgive my sins and cast them as far as the east is from the west. He is a forgiving God, but I struggled with forgiving myself.

Several years before the cancer I had a dream of an adopted daughter named Hope. God brought this fresh to my mind after my hysterectomy. I trusted He was making a promise to me, the promise of a daughter.

Five years later, true to His word, Hope came into our family when she was three weeks old. She had almost been a victim of abortion. Although I've never met her physical mother, I pray for her every day. She gave my daughter life—the most precious gift to give. And she gave her more—the hope of having the loving family that she could not provide. At first I wanted Hope to replace the daughter I had lost, but I soon realized that no child can ever be replaced.

God began revealing more areas that needed healing from my abortion. The damage done is much more severe than people realize. Physically, of course, a little child is ripped away from its mother's womb. But emotionally, I'm convinced there is already a bonding between mother and child, and it's as if a part of your own soul is torn away. A part of you dies as well.

Grieving is a major process that I needed to go through to be healed from my abortion. I believe a part of the grieving process means identifying with that little life as an individual, even giving your baby a name.

I will never forget that moment when my lifeless daughter lay before me, but through the healing grace of Jesus, I know that she is in heaven with Him, held in His arms. But I still have days when I cry for my little Jennifer who was never allowed to laugh or cry or hear the ocean waves or climb trees and feel the sunshine on her face or know the tears and struggles and joys of life. This is a letter I wrote to my daughter.

Dear Jennifer,

I knew the moment you were conceived, although I tried hard to ignore it. Since you were the result of rape, I felt so lonely and confused. In the beginning I wanted only to destroy you. However, when I began to experience your movements within, I found myself accepting your existence.

You were twenty-two weeks old by the time permission for my legal abortion was granted, and I had decided to keep you. I had grown to love you, but under pressure from those around me I went ahead with the abortion.

For years afterwards your cries echoed in endless dreams until healing finally took place. Then I named you and allowed myself to grieve over your death. I also was a victim as a result of making my decision on a few scraps of misinformation. Part of me died with you.

As you look down from heaven, I know you forgive me as even I have learned to forgive myself. Now I press on to help women who have made the mistake of abortion, and to also help others not to make the mistake I made. The healing can only come through the powerful love of Jesus.

Until we meet again, my Jennifer, I love you.

"As I picked myself up and walked home, I couldn't stop weeping. I felt dead inside. Everything within me was crushed—he stole from me something I could never get back."



Kathy DeZeeuw

I grew up in a family where we read the Bible at every meal and went to church three times a week—we were very religious, but we didn't have a real relationship with the Lord. As a young girl I was quite sheltered, and had the typical dreams of meeting the perfect guy and having the perfect marriage. But my dreams turned into a nightmare.

I wasn't allowed to date or go to movies, but one night when I was 16 I skipped church and went for pizza with a girlfriend. At the pizza place I accepted an invitation to a drive-in movie with a guy I didn't know. He'd been drinking heavily, and at the movie I discovered he'd just been released from prison. As he got more and more drunk, his deep anger became obvious. The movie ended, but instead of taking me back to my car, he drove to a remote lake where no one could hear my screams, and raped me.

As I picked myself up and walked home, I couldn't stop weeping. I felt dead inside. Everything within me was crushed—he stole from me something I could never get back. And what was worse was that my disobedience led to the rape. Since I wasn't "pulled off the street," I figured it probably wasn't a real rape—it must be my fault. So I hid my guilt and shame.

Somehow I knew I'd get pregnant. One month went into another, and as I waited for my period I became withdrawn and desperate. In despair I cried out to God and made all kinds of promises, but God didn't take this man's child away. Abortion wasn't legal then, so I tried to kill my child myself. I drank ant poison, jumped off tall haystacks, and punched my stomach as hard as I could, but nothing worked. I hated the baby, I hated the guy, and most of all I hated myself.

As my stomach grew bigger, I grew more terrified. I wore girdles to hide my bulging tummy, and by the time I'd get home from school I'd just about faint from the pain. In my most desperate attempt to hide what

happened, I tried to pin the blame on someone else. I began dating a young man, and I thought if I could seduce him, I could say it was his child—and just maybe he'd marry me.

Finally, one day at school I passed out, and the nurse called my mom to come get me. Once home, I ran upstairs to change into my brother's big sweat-shirts and pants. Mom followed and in her frustration she screamed, "You look pregnant!" I knew I couldn't hide any longer. "Mom, I am."

Dad said we needed to call the boy's folks and have a marriage as soon as possible. I knew it wasn't this second guy's child, but I didn't say anything. I'll never forget the night the boy and his parents came over. I was humiliated even further as he explained it couldn't possibly be his baby.

As the story got around about how terrible I was, the people in the church said I was a "no good daughter" and needed to be sent away. Many rumors were spread but I still didn't tell anyone about the rape. My parents sent me to a home for unwed mothers hundreds of miles away, and told me to give the baby up for adoption.

I was very lonely. The only thing I had left in life was this little one who'd made it this far with me. As the weeks went by the bonding grew stronger. The tiny being kicking inside me was now *my child*. It no longer belonged to the horrible person who raped me.

Finally, I went into labor. Each time a contraction started, the only thing I could think to do was to pray the only prayer I knew, "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name..." After 27 hours my baby boy was born, and then taken away from me as quickly as possible. I thought I'd never see him again.

I was required to stay for another ten days, and during that time I'd stand by the window of the nursery and stare at my son. I just wanted to hold him, to touch him before they took him away. But they wouldn't let me, so they'd drag me from the window.

When my parents arrived, the first thing I said was, "Daddy, do you want to see your grandson?" He said, "No, I don't want to see him or have anything to do with him." He was afraid that if he even saw the baby, he'd want to take him home. But I misunderstood his reaction, got very angry, and told them to leave.

That night I had the most distinct dream I've ever had—a dream about keeping my son. I sat up in bed and said, "Yes, Lord, no matter what happens, I'll take him home." As I laid back down my heart was at peace, and I slept well for the first time in months.