

Dear Folks,

We have a prayer request. In an effort to grow our children's work quickly because of the huge open door we are seeing now, I have taken on a few younger teachers, knowing they lacked some maturity. Unfortunately I learned last week that one of these young teachers, still in training, has had relations with one of our older teens and she is now pregnant. She tried killing the baby 3 times by taking some sort of medicine, then in desperation came to one of our female teachers asking her to help her get an abortion.

I have had several talks with both the boy and girl separately. I explained to them we believe God has been knitting together the baby in her womb and is precious to Him. I asked them to let the baby live. I have been very frank especially with the boy, about the full ramifications of their actions. At least in the short term this dilemma will hurt our reputation and Jesus's name. Some parents may pull their kids out of our program, once their secret is known. Nevertheless, I have affirmed our continual love for them and that God definitely still loves them both very much. I asked them to start focusing on how God wants them to deal with their situation, telling them His road may not be easy but it will be by far the best solution for everyone.

The boy wants to take responsibility for his actions. They want to marry. He will approach his parents within the next 24 hours to confess and ask them to offer marriage to her parents on his behalf. He has no money and they will need to find a dowry somehow. We do not know if they will agree as both sets of parents have been opposed to their marriage in the past. The kids have been sweet on each other for a few years. Both have fathers that have a poor relationship with these two kids. If the parents do not agree to marriage, they will almost certainly force the girl to abort. In this traditional rural culture, there is enormous shame for the girl and her chances of marriage will be deemed ruined when her secret is out. At that point I will likely try to persuade the parents to let the baby live. We have found a Christian safe house where she can stay until the baby is born.

This all came to light while the boy was away attending a discipleship training. At my request his trainers assigned a married man to counsel the boy. It turned out the man was a perfect fit to counsel. His own mother tried to kill him 3 times before he was born, even hiring someone to break his neck just before birth. Obviously unsuccessfully. Then as a young man he had relations with a girl and his church essentially disowned him. Many years later, he now disciples young people.

The boy and girl are both believers and are nice kids. They are obviously imperfect and foolish, as I am. I ask folks pray that both kids will come out stronger through this difficult dilemma, that God might save the baby, and most of all, that what the enemy meant for evil and shame, God will use for good and His glory. Pray for the boy and girl to be strong, trust the Lord, and to grow quickly in the Lord.

Trusting the Lord,
John