



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Abortion Pill Reversal: A Second Chance at Life

Guest(s): Rebekah Hagan

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Dr. James Dobson: You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting division of the James Dobson Family Institute. I am that James Dobson, and I'm so pleased that you've joined us today.

Roger Marsh: Thank you for listening to Family Talk. I'm Roger Marsh, and the program you're about to hear was recorded in January, 2022 at the National March for Life in Washington, DC. Enjoy.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Hello and welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. Dr. Tim Clinton here, president of the American Association of Christian Counselors and co-host of Family Talk. I'm coming to you from the annual March for Life in Washington, DC. Every year, thousands of pro-life individuals come together at the National Mall in Washington to march for the lives of the pre-born. This march started after the passing of Roe v. Wade on January 22nd, 1973, some 49 years ago. Now, today on our broadcast, our guest knows firsthand the uncertainty and fear a woman experiences with an unexpected pregnancy and the feeling that she has no other option except abortion. Her name, Rebekah Hagan. She's a writer, advocate and one of today's youngest speakers on the issues of teen pregnancy, abortion and abortion pill reversal. She's also a mission advancement officer for Heartbeat International.

Rebekah was raised in a Christian home where abortion was never discussed. Her pro-life ministry, in fact, was unplanned and fueled by her firsthand experience. It's an amazing story. She became pregnant for the first time at 17 with her son Eli, and then again with a second child while in her first year of college. Feeling ashamed and fearing that she would lose her family and be forced to drop out of school, Rebekah thought raising two children by herself would be impossible. And just over seven weeks pregnant, she began a medication abortion that changed her life. However, and more importantly, her story did not end there. Rebekah, welcome to Family Talk. Thank you for joining us.

Rebekah Hagan: Thank you so much for having me, Tim. It's really just an honor and a privilege to be with you today.

Dr. Tim Clinton: So excited to get an opportunity to sit down with you and talk about your story. Take us all the way back, Rebekah, to your childhood, growing up, your family, Christian home. What was it like?

Rebekah Hagan: My life, while it wasn't perfect, looking back, I didn't experience a whole lot of disadvantages. I mean, there was no abuse, no serious misfortune. I went to good schools. We lived in a middle class family, great community in the Sacramento area of California. And I always tell people that even though I'm from California, my family was and is very normal. And we went to church three or four times a week. We were Baptist, so there was Awanas and Bible study and my dad was on the worship team. And again, not perfect, but certainly not who you would think would experience unplanned pregnancy, and then twice, and again, not someone that you would think would choose abortion. But it just goes to show that no one is immune from these types of choices and decisions.

Dr. Tim Clinton: 17 years of age and pregnant, that's a tough spot to be in. A lot of people think, ah, you know, it's just a part of life. No. When you're 17 and pregnant and you're facing a lot of challenges and issues, I mean, what was it like for you?

Rebekah Hagan: I remember being 17 years old. I'm a senior in high school, I actually found out just a couple weeks before my senior year started. And it was terrifying and mortifying, and I felt like I was the only one who had to wear her sin. I was the only one who had to wear her sin around the halls, and the teachers would talk and the students would talk, and it felt horrible at the time. But thankfully, even though my family never talked about abortion, I considered myself kind of pro-life, hadn't really thought about what that meant. And honestly, at 17, even though it was hard, I kind of thought, "I need to own up to my actions. I need to be responsible for this child that I created." And so even though I didn't grow up in a firmly pro-life home, and even though, yes, it was hard at school and-

Dr. Tim Clinton: You chose life.

Rebekah Hagan: ... elsewhere. Yes, absolutely. And I'm so grateful that I did.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You had your son Eli.

Rebekah Hagan: Yes. I had my son Eli.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Go on to college, which probably was another tough decision with a son.

Rebekah Hagan: Exactly.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Trying to figure out how to make life work. And you find yourself pregnant again.

Rebekah Hagan: Yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Must have been horrifying.

Rebekah Hagan: It was terrifying. And this time there was no silver lining. When I got pregnant the first time at 17, when the fear kind of wore off, I thought, "How hard could this be?" And then when I was pregnant the second time, and I'd already experienced parenthood and single parenthood and their dad, the father of both my children had just left. He was horribly abusive and had different relationships going on. Now there was no silver lining. There was no, "I can do this." There was no "I need to be responsible and raise this baby." And it was just a totally different experience from the first time I found out I was pregnant.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I think a lot of people don't understand the shame that goes with it.

Rebekah Hagan: Absolutely.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And it can really rip you apart, can't it?

Rebekah Hagan: Oh gosh, absolutely. And people are cruel.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Rebekah, while you're pregnant, your mind starts racing. You're trying to figure out what to do. And in the midst of it, you make a decision that you want to end this pregnancy. Take us back there.

Rebekah Hagan: So first of all, I think it's just important for people to know, to set the scene for what that mindset is like of a girl in an unplanned crisis pregnancy. Living in my parents' home, couldn't even take a pregnancy test there. I go to a local grocery store bathroom. So I'm alone, I'm isolated, I'm not seeking wise counsel. I find out I'm pregnant in this dirty public grocery bathroom stall. And again, I don't text my friend, I don't visit my pastor, I don't tell my parents. Before ever even leaving that bathroom, decided to have an abortion.

And I just thought, even as a Christian, because I'd never heard abortion talked about in the church, I thought, God's just going to have to forgive me on this one because I'd rather face my heavenly Father later than try to face my earthly father now, because one is forgiving and one's not, and God will forgive me, but my dad won't. And in a moment of panic, what abortion did was it pit me against my child. And it told me that only one of us was going to get out of the situation alive and successful. And I chose me and I chose the baby I already had. And it seemed like a sacrificial choice.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Walk us through the attempts to have the abortion.

Rebekah Hagan: So I turned to my phone like so many of us do, not just young people, but young and old, right? Looking for an answer, type in 'abortion clinics near me,' and found out that there were eight within a 20-mile radius of my home in California, so it was everywhere. Found out about chemical abortion, which at the time, I'm young, 18, college freshman. It was marketed as safe. They tell you

it's as simple as taking some Tylenol. They compare it to Tylenol, rather, they tell you, "Just like you would take Tylenol to solve a problem headache, you can take the abortion pill to solve a problem pregnancy." And so I thought a chemical abortion would be perfect. It was easier to compartmentalize, it was cheaper, easier to hide. And that's what I chose. My first attempt ended in the clinic telling me I couldn't have the abortion that day.

My second attempt ended in the abortion clinic telling me I couldn't have my abortion that day. They actually tried to take a sample of my blood, couldn't find a vein, said, "I'm so sorry, we can't help you today." And I was running out of time. Back in 2013 you only had nine weeks to go through with a chemical abortion, and now they've upped it to 10, 11, sometimes 12 weeks during the pandemic, which is wild to think about 12 weeks gestation, a three-month old baby being aborted at home. But I was running out of time, and finally it was the very last attempt I had was March 13th of 2013 was when I walked into a Planned Parenthood building in Sacramento and actually started the chemical abortion.

Dr. Tim Clinton: That must have been a grueling moment inside your heart.

Rebekah Hagan: It was.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And in that moment, what took place? This is stunning.

Rebekah Hagan: It was me telling myself, "Rebekah, it's mind over matter. You don't want to be here. I know everything in you is saying get out of your seat and run, but you can't because this is your..." It sounds cruel to say, but, "This is your way out. This is your ticket to finishing college, to maintaining that relationship with your parents, to a better life." And that's what I kept telling myself, you have to do this. And I sat with there with a clinic worker, and she's basically telling me everything I read online. This will be really natural. Expect some bleeding, expect some cramping. This shouldn't be too painful. You can go back to work or school tomorrow if you're ready. And she said, "You're going to take this first pill in the clinic." And that's mifepristone, also called RU-486, and known simply as the abortion pill.

She said, "You're going to take this with me right here, and it'll end your pregnancy." I think back to that moment, and again, I was 18 years old, a young frantic girl, and I didn't know how to advocate for myself, and I didn't think to say, "Excuse me, how does a pill end a pregnancy? How does that work?" And then she said, "24 hours later, you're going to take a second set of pills called misoprostol, and this will just expel your pregnancy." And what I didn't know then that I know now, is that the way the abortion pill works is that it deprives progesterone from a growing baby. Without progesterone babies die.

I mean, there's no easy way to say it. And then 24 hours later, I was being sent home, unbeknownst to me at 18 years old with no medical supervision, while

my parents thought I was asleep, with labor inducing drugs. I mean, the same drugs they give to women in active labor at 40 weeks gestation. And I had no clue what I was signing up for, what was going to happen to me, to my baby, to me a month from now, a year from now. And so, because I was so under-informed, I said, "Okay, yes, I'll take this first pill. I guess I want to start the process," and took the first RU-486 abortion pill in the clinic that day.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Says that you made your way out to the car, had an experience there.

Rebekah Hagan: Yeah.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Can you share that?

Rebekah Hagan: Absolutely. So I got to my car in the parking lot, which maybe took 90 seconds, not very long, to have a change of heart. And I sat down and I just thought, "Oh, my gosh, what did I just do?" And it was like a veil or the fog or something was lifted off of my eyes almost, and I could now very clearly see what I had just done. And from a spiritual background as a Christian now who's walking with the Lord, what I think it was is when you're walking in sin and you think you're going the right way and you're walking down this path that seems well illuminated, and then all of a sudden you make this choice and you take that turn.

And it was like Satan himself blew out all the candles, all the illumination, and said, "Gotcha. And now you know shame and now you know pain and now you know grief. And now you know what it's like to have just listened to me, Satan, strayed away from the Lord, and ended your child's life." And I felt in that moment, it sounds silly to say, but like I had been duped, like I had been sold a lie.

Dr. Tim Clinton: I gotcha.

Rebekah Hagan: Yeah. Not just from Planned Parenthood, but from the ultimate deceiver who was after my baby and after my soul too. And that's how it felt outside of this clinic.

Dr. Tim Clinton: In that moment, something else starts taking place inside of you.

Rebekah Hagan: Yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Let's go there.

Rebekah Hagan: So I experienced this radical change. I'm realizing it's March 13th. The very next day is my son Eli's first birthday. I'm thinking tomorrow is going to be a day that I brought one baby into this world and took another one out, literally. I'm frantic, I'm praying. I just said, "God, if there's a way out, please help me find it. And if not, just please help me to forgive myself." So this time I prayed, thank

God, but I still turned to my phone because that's what we all do. And I typed in, "I took the first abortion pill and I don't want to take the second. I started an abortion and I don't want to finish it." And after searching for what seemed like forever, but was maybe 20, 30 minutes, found what is now called abortionpillreversal.com. And I called, I had no idea who was going to be waiting on the other end of that phone. And I called, a nurse answered, she explained what I had taken, and she found a doctor who was willing to prescribe progesterone to counteract that abortion pill, and it worked.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Planned Parenthood in the midst of this, tried to influence you. What were they saying to you? They found out that you took the abortion pill reversal.

Rebekah Hagan: Right. So when you have a chemical abortion, you're supposed to go back and make sure the abortion was complete. You have a follow up ultrasound. And I just didn't show up. I didn't owe them anything. I thought, what do they need to know? And finally I returned their many phone calls and said, "I changed my mind. I'm using progesterone to reverse what I've done." And at first they asked, "Do you have any idea what you're doing?" And I'm like, "No, I have no idea what I'm doing. I'm very scared. I'm young, trusting a doctor." And they said, "Because of the pill that you took, if you carry to term, which is not likely, your baby will probably have severe fetal anomalies." In fact, they even noted it on my medical record.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Horrible.

Rebekah Hagan: It was terrifying. I mean, just the fear that they're pushing on women.

Dr. Tim Clinton: So you got all this shame.

Rebekah Hagan: Absolutely.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Now you got all this experience, this horrible experience, and now you're really thinking, "Oh, man, where am I? What is happening? God help me," in the midst of it. So what was going on again inside of you? What'd you do?

Rebekah Hagan: I was terrified. I remember that entire pregnancy every time I even coughed or had a pregnancy related ache, I thought, "This is it. I'm getting what I deserve, the consequence of my actions. I'm losing this pregnancy, losing this baby." And then I had to wrestle with, what if I don't lose this pregnancy? I carry to term, deliver a baby that has a fetal anomaly that I have to explain to him or her one day. And wrestling with that was extremely hard. I ended up transferring out of a public university to a private Christian school just because I needed the prayer. I needed a relationship with Jesus. Living life without Jesus got me into this mess and so the only way I was going to get out it was if I had a relationship with the Lord. And so that's really what I started to seek out.

Dr. Tim Clinton: And a miracle happened.

Rebekah Hagan: It did.

Dr. Tim Clinton: A beautiful miracle.

Rebekah Hagan: Yes.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Tell us.

Rebekah Hagan: Yes. So on October 20th of 2013, I gave birth to a little boy. And I remember there were so many doctors in the room that they were going to take him and x-ray him and do all these different things to him. And after a couple minutes, one of the doctors came over to me and they said, "Rebekah, he's so healthy we don't even want to expose him to radiation." And I just said, "What?" And they said, "Yeah, he's perfectly healthy." And he was and still is perfectly healthy. He was one of the very first, what I like to call abortion pill reversal babies. He is eight and a half years old, he'll be nine later this year, and his name is Zachariah, which is Hebrew and it means the Lord remembers. Because looking back, even on everything that went wrong during my plan to have this abortion, I now see God, God just saying, "Pause, Rebekah. I've got you. I have a plan. Trust in me." And He made a way, even when I didn't think it was possible for Zach to be here.

Dr. Tim Clinton: What a story and what courage and what beauty to see how God showed up.

Rebekah Hagan: He did. It's all the Lord. All Him.

Dr. Tim Clinton: How did your family reconcile all this?

Rebekah Hagan: So it's funny, my dad found out in my typical dad fashion, intercepted a voicemail from my doctor that was mistakenly left on my home phone. And he found out right away, he said, "Your doctor says you're pregnant again." And I said, "Well, Dad, that's not it. I tried to have an abortion and I changed my mind and I'm trying to save this baby." And he immediately went from being angry to shocked and scared for the baby, and then deeply, deeply saddened by the fact that he never meant when he said, "I'm going to kick you out if you get pregnant again," he never intended for that to send me to an abortion clinic. He thought it would prevent me from another unplanned pregnancy. My poor mom, she came home from work and she flushed the second set of labor-inducing pills, the ones I didn't take, down the toilet.

And she said, "I don't want this evil stuff in my house." And I said, "Mom, why are you so riled up? We don't even talk about abortion. We've never talked about this." And she said, "When I was a teenager, grandma took me to have three abortions." And it was then that I realized that that's why my family didn't talk about this subject. And the good news is she's found so much healing through this and has gone through after abortion care and received counseling because of this experience.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Let's talk about families who may be in the middle of the situation right now. There might be someone listening right now just, I mean, the volume's up and there's tears flowing and they're thinking, "What am I going to do?" Maybe it's a girl. What do you say to her?

Rebekah Hagan: I think no matter what situation you're in, there is hope for you. And my life, my children, the husband I have now, the ministry I'm working in, is proof that there was a whole life waiting on the other side of my yes to God. And so stop what you're doing. I'm just speaking to whoever's listening, stop what you're doing and say yes to Him because His plan for your life is so much better. And so if you're considering abortion, stop what you're doing and say yes to God. If you've already started an abortion, stop what you're doing and say yes to God. And if abortion is in your past and you've never experienced true healing, I would say that there's hope and redemption for you too.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Yeah. He forgives.

Rebekah Hagan: He does, He does.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Speak to families too. That shame piece. Everybody starts running and scattering and they hide and they're confused and that's all part of it. But what do you say to parents out there about having conversations with their kids? Just that's a part of the parenting process, let's talk about these issues. Let me make sure you know, "Honey, I want you to come to me. It may not make me happy in my heart, but please come to Dad. Please come to Mom."

Rebekah Hagan: It's so important. And even on a very minor level, my oldest children, they're eight and nine, I'm already planting that seed that no matter what you do, you always come and tell me. Just so that they know as they grow, we all make mistakes. And teenagers, especially, with their under-formed brains, make mistakes. Some are more reckless than others, but I want them to always know no matter how minor or major that mistake is, they can always come to me, and that a baby, while it was created perhaps in sin, is not a sin,

Dr. Tim Clinton: Not the baby's fault.

Rebekah Hagan: Right.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Let's take this a little bit further, I think, with moms and dads and the kind of conversations you think they do need to have, I mean, openly with their children. What do you think they should say to them about abortion?

Rebekah Hagan: Again, I think it starts early. It starts with telling children that life in the womb is created in the image of God. And that no matter how that baby was conceived, no matter if they were born abled or disabled, they still have value. And I hear a lot of people talk about quality of life, and I heard someone say best that quality of life can be defined as what you do for the world. But then I hear sanctity of

life and I hear it less talked about. And that's not what you do for the world, but who you were made in the image of. And of course, that would be our ultimate creator, Lord. And I think that that needs to be talked about in homes more because we have children, even Christian children, talking about, "Well, what will their quality of life be like?"

And that's not really the point. The point is that every human life has value. And I think that has to be a subject talked about with children from a very young age. I had my children out here marching today, eight and nine years old. They don't know really what abortion is. They don't really know that moms end pregnancies. But they know that moms get scared, that moms need help and that they've seen their younger siblings in ultrasound and that they know, of course, they're human. So this is a conversation that can happen.

Dr. Tim Clinton: Because you never know, this situation can happen. And they find themselves in a very dark moment and they don't know what to do, all alone and scared. They say that young women typically make a decision in a 24-hour window. Boy, the church, you think of all the crisis pregnancy counselors and more coaches are out there on the front line. Yay, God, we need to build an army of people to step up into those moments because that's a dark, difficult moment to be in. Let's close this way. I find it really fascinating the abortion reversal pill and what God's doing in and through that. Any other thoughts related to that?

Rebekah Hagan: Yes, it's incredible. I think it's an ultimate reminder that what the enemy means for evil, God can restore and redeem and use for His glory. And I think abortion pill reversal is just that. It took something evil like the abortion pill and turned it into something redemptive through abortion pill reversal. And excitingly, I get to tell you that just recently, January 22, abortion pill reversal surpassed the 3,000 milestone. So over 3,000 babies have been saved from abortion pill reversal, which is incredible. But it also means that over 3,000 moms got what I like to call a second chance of choice. And they are so grateful, I am so grateful. So that's just some exciting news I get to share from you.

Dr. Tim Clinton: You have been so brave to come on and share your story, so moving and delightful to see the heart of the Lord in you and what He's doing in and through your life. We're going to pray for you and ask God to continue to raise up your voice for such a time as this. If people want to learn more about you and what you're doing and just want to pray for you, where can they go to learn more?

Rebekah Hagan: That's an awesome question. I so appreciate that. They could always go to my website. It's rebekahhagan.org, and then of course, I am with Heartbeat International, so that's another great way to reach me.

Dr. Tim Clinton: On behalf of Dr. Dobson and his wife, Shirley, and the team at Family Talk, we tip the hat to you. And such a delight to have you. Thank you for joining us.

Rebekah Hagan: Thank you for having me.

Roger Marsh:

What an honest, emotional, brave testimonial from Rebekah Hagan of Heartbeat International today here on Family Talk. Boy, talk about second chances, and so relatable for so many women with the increase in medical abortions, mail order pills, and abortion on demand. As you just heard, Rebekah took the first pill, the progesterone blocker, for a medical abortion. But after taking that first of two pills, she immediately had regrets. Thank God she was able to save her baby with the abortion pill reversal antidote, and I'm happy to say her boy Zachariah remains healthy and very much alive and thriving today. If you are pregnant and confused or in crisis, or perhaps you know someone who is, there is help. There are good local Christian pregnancy resource centers available that can explain to you what your options are to save your baby. And if you're grappling with the abortion pill in an emergency situation and you need to learn more, you can go to abortionpillreversal.com.

That's just the three words. Abortion, pill, reversal, dotcom, or call (877) 558-0333. That's (877) 558-0333. This is completely confidential, by the way, and you can speak to someone who is knowledgeable who'll be on the other end of the line. Well, that's it for today. From Dr. Dobson who has been in the fight for life since the beginning back in 1973, let's all be in prayer for everyone who is confused or has doubts or maybe those who are alone or feeling hopeless in a pregnancy situation. There is always hope. Our Lord and Almighty Savior forgives us our sins and He loves you. He loves me. He loves each of us even in our sinful, broken state. Until next time, I'm Roger Marsh, and on behalf of Dr. Dobson and Dr. Clinton, may God continue to keep you safe and watch over you and bless your family immeasurably.

Announcer:

This has been a presentation of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute.