

What Do I Do With My Fertility?

The concept of controlling a new soul's birth is not new. But we have advanced the concept to new heights. Here I will try to defend my position of no artificial means of interfering with God's plan for the next soul that may touch your life. This is not saying I want perfect situations only. God gives us guidelines knowing full well that even those intent on following him will frequently mess up.

Blessing a family with children is a deep rooted concept in the Bible. In fact, in Old Testament writings, God said those without children were cursed. Maybe we have advanced in not thinking such damning thoughts of another's fertility. But truly accepting as a gift from God the opportunity to show another soul the way to live in this world is a phenomenal task. An awesome responsibility. A great privilege. Our society values that enough to take the child away when someone is terribly negligent in that duty. But of course they don't exterminate the child, they value his or her life enough to put them in another home.

God chooses to bless some and not others. Man has figured out how to render infertile even the most fertile of wombs and bring life to even the most infertile of couples with artificial insemination, in vitro fertilization and even perhaps soon cloning.

See [Paul VI - Humanae Vitae](#) for a more exhaustive discussion from a real philosopher. The Bible speaks poorly of those who try to rob the sexual act of its procreative powers (Onan's curse, Gen 38:9). So we need to realize God at one point made a big issue of using the sexual act without being open to the possibility of creating life. Free conjugal relations between unmarried individuals would not be possible without effective contraception or easily available abortion. Up to 1/3 of divorce cases are finding through DNA testing that children thought to be from the marital union are not from the husband. So again many of us humanly goof up our attempt to live a righteous life.

When God wants to bless your family with a third or fourth or fifth child and you think you can't afford it, what are you saying to God? What part of what you cannot afford will be here in a hundred years? What part of you is unable to meet the challenge of bringing another soul to adulthood? Do you think you will not have the energy? Have you put "dibs" on those financial and emotional resources already? Do any of these outweigh the importance of bringing a soul that God has plans for into being? Do any of us know God's plan so well that we can say "no" to life?

This is not to say that unchecked procreation is God's plan. Certainly God expects that there is "a time to sow and a time to reap, a time to embrace and a time to withhold from embracing" Ecclesiastes 3:5. Having couples communicate about fertility (of the woman) is as vital as knowing when you run out of cereal. It should be a habit of every fertile couple. When trying to get pregnant couples are certainly aware of the woman's cycle. It should be an awareness that persists and helps a couple communicate their desire to bring or not bring a soul to being. God's plans are not always our plans, however. Being open to the possibility of children even when you are trying to avoid conception in fertile times is important if living this way.

Being married is being open to God's plan for children. Certainly most couples have some disagreement as to how many souls they had dreamed of bringing into the world. Most find expenses in life to be more than they imagined. Many wish they could provide more to their children. But remember that all a child wants is their parent's love. Give generously of yourself to your children. Give then generous heaps of your time. Perhaps you had thought of a different vocation, and this unexpected challenge will be your motivation for striking out into new territories. God gives us all 256 gifts. One of them will nicely intertwine with the kind of family God has planned for you.

As we mature in our faith life we should let our children see that our biggest desire in life is to please "Daddy," or God the Father. We should first seek to please God. Then our spouse. Then our children. Our parents deserve love and respect, but are not the first responsibility once we are married.

A hard situation to deal with in a marriage is infertility. If more people were open to adoption instead of abortion that problem would be largely eliminated. What is God's plan for such a couple? Again, if truly moved, God will make the adoption possible. Lawyers and bureaucrats are getting too rich off of most adoptions now. It is sad that the state took over what used to be a charitable function.

If however you desire only to bear through your own womb, what is consistent with God's will? Certainly fixing a medical problem is within God's plan. But is it God's plan to allow a "seed" outside of the body, to allow a stranger to join together the seeds that bring new life? If so when does the "artificial" situation cease? Will many souls be formed? Will many be discarded? Or sold? Should we clone a very saintly person? Would the cloned person be saintly?

The answer has to be very individual. But it is clear that God made some individuals infertile and permanently so through his own

design. And how difficult it can be for the couple trying to follow God's will to sit still with the infertility and look toward other ways of doing God's will. Deflecting family and friend's good intentioned cajoling to get going with the baby machine can be tiresome. Even stranger is God's occasional gift of a child to those couples in their later years who thought it no longer possible. That is such a foreign occurrence in this society that I have heard many stories of doctors pressuring such women into abortions due to the higher health risks unique to an older woman bearing a child.

Young women have also been pressured into abortions due to infections that had a small but higher than normal chance of causing birth defects. Another insidious problem in the medical profession is in genetic testing. Most women are now pressured into testing to see if their baby will have trisomies or other malformations. Their assumption of course is that we must kill such a soul for it could not possibly be part of our plan. Sure our natural inclination is for a perfect child. Lawyers win enormous sums of money convincing our increasingly lost judicial system that such a birth should be prevented. But is it part of God's plan to put a soul with a trisomy or other malformation on to this earth? Does God will that soul into being?

If we are made in the image of God then we must look to God for answers in our times of distress. My heart goes out to every parent who has the challenge of raising a retarded or handicapped or chronically ill child. But the soul of such a parent is a thing of beauty to God. Without them the society might forget to take care of the elderly many of whom need just as much attention as an infant, or the poor who have their own set of problems. Without individuals with special needs we will be catapulted into the thinking and even the heinous actions of The Third Reich. Hitler only extended the warped thinking of today into its logical conclusion.

We cannot imagine the importance of the development of our soul and its need to find a likeness to God. It certainly will surprise us if we truly let go and let God give us his plan for our life. The concept of "Right to Life" is more than a small statement. It is a lifestyle that not one of us can model because of our own human flaws and failings. It is a journey all of us are on. It is one I cannot live for you, nor you for me. I don't wish to interfere with how you live, but I happily challenge you in your thoughts, hopefully without offending or hurting anyone.

These views are Dr. Giese's views not necessarily those of the practice. Written December 2005