

Is IVF Right For Christians?

'You did form my inwards parts. You did knit me together in my mother's womb. I will praise You. I will give thanks to You for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are Your works and that my soul knows well. My frame was not hidden from You when I was being formed in secret; intricately woven in the depths of the womb. Your eyes saw my unformed substance and in Your Book all the days of my life were written before ever they took shape, when as yet there was none of them' (Psalm 139:13 to 16).

'You know not what is the way of the wind, or how the spirit comes to the bones in the womb of a pregnant woman' (Ecclesiastes 11:5).

'You have clothed me with skin and flesh and did knit me together with bones and sinews. You have granted me life and loving kindness. Your visitation has saved my spirit' (Job 10:11 & 12).

Not every couple will have difficulty having their own children. Almost every person will marry, have as many children as they want, and sometimes more than they want, without worrying about infertility. This Bible study is for people who are unable to have children and are contemplating IVF (In-vitro Fertilisation) treatment. Hormonal treatment is a much lesser treatment, is more acceptable and is not in the same league as IVF, so it is not relevant to this Bible study. Artificial insemination is questionable because the child may never know who their father is, and that can be devastating to the child when they grow up. Adoption is another option but is not relevant to this particular study.

What do the scriptures say about having babies? It is God Who forms us in the womb (Job 31:15), it is the unborn baby who pushes itself into place to ready itself for the birth (Hosea 13:13) and it is God Who takes us out of the womb and gives us our breath (Psalm 22:9; 71:6; Job 12:10). It is God Who forms us (helps us grow) from the day we leave the womb (Isaiah 44:2 & 24). We are called to serve God right from the womb and He names us (Isaiah 49:1 & 5). God knows us before we are conceived in the womb (Jeremiah 1:5). Twins can be competitive before they are born (Genesis 25:22 to 26). Babies can hear noises and feel emotion while in the womb (Luke 1:41 & 44). It is God Who makes a couple barren or fruitful – He is the one Who opens or closes the womb (Genesis 21:1 & 2; 25:21; 29:31; Exodus 23:26; Deuteronomy 7:14; Luke 1:7, 13, 24, 36 & 37). If we trust the Lord, He will give us more spiritual children than if we have our own (Psalm 113:9; Isaiah 54:1; Galatians 4:27).

As we can see in this group of scriptures, the human spirit from God is sent into the womb, and since God knows us before we are conceived, when we are yet an unformed substance, before we have any days, the spirit is sent from God and enters the womb at conception. If we look at the process of IVF, we know the baby is conceived in a Petri dish and after a few days is placed into the womb of the woman. Often the woman is not even the baby's biological mother. Calling the baby a foetus or an embryo does not in any way change the fact it is an infant; a tiny person. We need to ask ourselves these very important questions: At what point in time does the spirit enter the IVF child? Does the Lord put His spirit into the Petri dish? Or does He wait until the baby is placed into the womb? Only God knows the answers to those questions.

If we look at the whole IVF process, we see there are a huge number of babies being artificially conceived and only a small number end up being born. Most die, are destroyed or used for further research. This type of fertilisation kills more babies than it implants. For every one baby that has successfully been born, at least one hundred have died. A Christian couple need to consider another very important question: Do they really desire to take part in a process that kills so many innocent, helpless children? By taking part in the IVF process, they are compliant to the overall system of killings and will have to give an account to God for being involved in such a system. Every person, Christian and non-Christian alike, who has ever been involved in IVF, will have to give an account to God on Judgement Day for the multitudes of babies that have died during this process. That is a chilling fact. Another fact is God knows every single baby before it is conceived, and that would include all of the tiny IVF victims.

As Christians, there are only two courses of action. Firstly, ask the Lord if it is His will for us to have a baby in the first place. Not every couple will be granted children because the Lord may have a special job for us to do, which cannot be achieved if children are involved. If we are committed Christians, then we must have the attitude, "Lord, not our will but Yours." If it is not the Lord's will, and we press ahead and have a child against the Lord's will, then we are making that little person a god, because we are putting the desire for a child in front of our desire to please God. Jesus said, "They who love their son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37). "If anyone comes to Me and does not love Me more than their own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, yes, and his own life also, they cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:26). God must come before any personal desire we have.

The second course of action for Christians is simple. Once God's will for our lives is revealed and the Lord promises a biological child, then wait for His timing. Be assured, if the Lord promises children, even if we have to wait several years, He will most definitely give us a child. All we would need to do is trust Him, thank Him for the child we are waiting for, and continue serving Him until the child arrives – without medical intervention and most importantly, with God's blessing.

It is okay not to have children. There is no stigma attached to being childless. Many people choose not to marry and have children. Paul and the apostles were obvious examples (1 Corinthians 7:8, 24 to 40). Jesus never married and encouraged others to remain single for the Kingdom's sake (Matthew 19:10 to 12), and He said it would be a hard thing for some people to accept. People who pressure their adult children to have babies so they can have grandchildren are wrong. People who choose to remain childless to serve the Lord are to be commended and will receive great blessings like Anna did (Luke 2:36 to 38). Anna was only one of two people other than Mary and Joseph who saw Jesus when He was just a few days old and God revealed to Anna, the infant Jesus was the Messiah Israel was waiting for. Simeon was the only other person (Luke 2:34). Childless couples are not in the least bit selfish and they can serve the Lord with great freedom.

Having children is not wrong; having no children is not wrong. We need to live in peace. However, having children via IVF is questionable. Out of all the fertility treatments, IVF is the most evil. It looks good on the surface – yes, the medics are helping people with infertility, but the cost to the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent, helpless, defenceless babies cannot be calculated. No, IVF is not right for committed Christians but even then, the decision is still up to the individual couple. Just because they 'feel' okay about it, does not mean God agrees with them, but in His mercy He will forgive them if they repent. Jesus said, "Who is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" He called a little child to Himself and set him in the midst of the disciples and said, "I tell you, unless you repent and become as humble as little children, you will in no way enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever humbles themselves as this little child will be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever receives one little child in My name receives Me" (Matthew 18:1 to 5).

Amen and God bless you.

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