



The Words No Christian Parents Want To Hear

DREADED WORDS: "MOM, DAD, I'M PREGNANT"

THERE ARE CERTAIN WORDS in the English language that we don't like to hear, in fact, we dread to hear them. Probably, the most dreaded words would come from the doctor's mouth to the family in the waiting room: "I'm so sorry. We tried our best, and there is nothing more we can do..." Next in line might be the words spoken by a teenage daughter: "Mom, Dad, I'm pregnant."

With these words comes a flood of emotions evidenced by tears, anger, recrimination, fear and sometimes condemnation. Of all the challenges facing parents of teenagers, the only news that is worse than that of death, is the news that a daughter has become

pregnant, or that a son has impregnated a girl.

For many years, my wife, Flora, and I have been closely involved with teenage pregnancy, with many girls living in our home for a period of time ranging from weeks to months, and subsequently helping them place their babies for adoption, or, in a few cases, helping them to adjust to being a full-time mother. From this perspective, perhaps some words can be offered that can help families that find themselves in this situation.

ABORTION IS NOT THE ANSWER

To start with, let me clearly state that abortion is not the answer. This is not a treatise

on the sin of abortion, but we need to understand that the Scriptures clearly state that what is in the womb is a living being, not just a blob of tissue. When Mary came to visit her kinswoman Elizabeth, the child Elizabeth was carrying in her womb responded to Mary's voice: "*For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy*" ([Luke 1:44](#)). Besides the sin of murdering a baby, the abortionists do not warn their clients of the emotional scars that many women carry for years, even for a lifetime, after an abortion.

Dr. David C. Reardon, of the Elliott Institute in Springfield, IL did a study of hundreds of women 10–20 years after an abortion. Over 50% of the women reported feelings of betrayal of their beliefs and ideals, agony, guilt, sorrow, depression, grief, bitterness, regret, despair, shame, unworthiness, severe weeping, and a loss of self-confidence, among other things.

These are just some of the emotions that followed for years. A Canadian study showed 25% of women who had an abortion made visits to psychiatrists, compared to 3% of a control group. A Danish study showed a 53% higher rate of psychiatric admissions for women who had abortions compared to those who delivered their children. A study in Finland reveals a suicide rate among those who had abortions to be 300% greater than all women of reproductive age, and 600% more than women who gave birth. Other studies find an increased risk of breast cancer (50%) and other medical complications.

I have known of parents who "solved" the problem of a daughter's pregnancy by pressuring for an abortion. But they were not the one's who received a call at 2 a.m. from a nearly hysterical teenager distraught over her abortion. I have spent years trying to bring this particular young woman back to the Lord. I strongly suspect that she feels unworthy.

REJECTION IS NOT THE ANSWER

Neither is rejection the answer. Many years ago I was in a gospel meeting in a small town in Indiana when a family approached me with their 14-year-old daughter. Vickie was pregnant, having been seduced by Mr. Cool Joe. Vickie's father's anger prompted him to say he never wanted to see her again. So this frightened child came home with me, having been rejected for the third time in her life. She had been literally abandoned as a baby and left in a deserted house. Then Mr. Cool Joe abandoned her, refusing any responsibility after assuring her that all would be okay. So a frightened little girl came home with me. Thankfully, Dad later relented.

So, what are parents to do? If there is ever a time in a girl's life that she needs love and support, this is the time. It is not a time to smooth over sin, but it is a time to embrace, as the prodigal son's father did ([Luke 15:20](#)).

THE CHOICE OF ADOPTION

If possible, the father of the child should be involved in discussions. If the couple is mature enough, do they want to marry? If not, the decision must then be made whether or not the girl wants to keep the baby, or place it for adoption. Out of some eighty cases with which we have been involved, only a handful has kept the baby. Some-times that has worked out well, and sometimes not. There is normally an emotional attachment to this child that has been carried in the womb for nine months, and it may be hard to part with the child. But a realistic assessment of what is best for the child may determine that adoption is the best course. A child's ideal situation is to be raised by two loving parents.

If adoption is the decision made, then where is the girl to live? In several cases, the girl has continued to live with her family. This may not always work out, and this is why many have come to live with us, or with other families in our congregation. It

may be that the girl has so much shame that it is an emotional strain for her to be around people she knows. It may be that there is some harassment from the father of the child or his family. They may try to persuade her to have an abortion.

The reason these girls choose a private adoption is because they want to be sure the child goes to Christians. State agencies will certainly provide families that are of good character and financially able to care for the child, but the families that the state chooses probably won't be Christians, as we understand the Biblical definition. Private adoptions are legal in most states, but of course the adoption itself must comply with regulations. The girl must be interviewed to be sure she is not being coerced, and the adopting family must be approved by the state through a "home study." And there are costs involved medical bills, attorney's fees, state fees, etc.

Another consideration is whether the adoption is "open" or "closed." An open adoption allows the birth mother to have some contact with

the child, and this need to be agreed upon before the adoption process proceeds. In most cases, the adoption is closed.

In the adoption process, the father of the child should be involved. The last I heard, it takes two to get pregnant. Too many times, the young man walks away from all responsibility. He may have to be responsible for some medical bills, and if the girl keeps the baby, some states are now requiring that he pay child support. This is good. If adoption is chosen, he will have to sign a release before the state will approve the adoption.

Whatever decision is made with respect to adoption or keeping the baby, the girl needs love and support. Her emotional well-being has a direct affect upon the well-being of the child she is carrying in her womb. This child will be a blessing to someone, and needs to have a good head start.

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**Via Biblical Insights, Volume IX, Number 7,
July 2009**

Reposted from La Vista church of Christ