

Cascade Pregnancy Bible Study Series
Children are a Blessing

*T*he Bible tells us that children are a special gift from God, designed by him and given from Him to fit his purposes.

1. There are many ways God refers to our children, all of them positive.
 - a. Gifts, rewards and blessings. (Genesis 49:25; Deuteronomy 7:13; Psalm 127:3; Proverbs 17:6)
 - b. Demonstrations of his glory. (Isaiah 8:18, 29:23; Hosea 9:11)
 - c. Signs of strength. (Psalm 127:4, 144:12)
 - d. Signs of growth. (Psalm 128:3-4, 144:12)
2. God designs each child with special qualities to fulfill a purpose in his creation.
 - a. God is the creator of life and the designer of your child. (Psalm 139:13-14; Isaiah 46:3-4)
 - b. God creates his children with a purpose. (Jeremiah 1:5)
3. God gives us children to accomplish his various purposes.
 - a. For enlarging the population. (Genesis 1:28; Malachi 2:14-15)
 - b. For our help. (1 Chronicles 25:5-6; Proverbs 23:24; Luke 1:13-14; John 19:26-27; 1 Timothy 5:4)
 - c. To serve God and fulfill his promises. (Deuteronomy 7:12-14; 1 Samuel 1; Psalm 128; Jeremiah 1:5; Amos 2:11; Luke 1; Galatians 1:15-16)

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Family Structure

God has laid out his plan for a family's structure in the Bible.
As an act of obedience to Christ, you must do your part to fulfill your role in the family.

1. Christian families are to be a sign and wonder to the world, a public display of the relationship between Christ and the church. (Isaiah 8:18; Ephesians 5:23)
2. The husband is the head of the family. (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23)
 - a. He is to dwell with his wife in understanding. (1 Peter 3:7)
 - b. He is to love his wife. (Colossians 3:19)
 - c. He is to give up his wants, needs and desires for his wife's good. (Ephesians 5:25, 28)
 - d. If he does not treat her lovingly, his prayers will be hindered. (1 Peter 3:7)
 - e. He is to provide for his family. (1 Timothy 5:8)
3. The wife is to be her husband's helper. (Genesis 2:18)
 - a. She is to submit to her husband (Ephesians 5:22; Colossians 3:18) even if he is an unbeliever and does not do what God calls him to do as the husband. (1 Peter 3:1-2, 5-6)
 - b. She is to love and obey her husband. (Titus 2:4-5)
4. Children are to obey their parents. (Ephesians 6:1-2; Colossians 3:20)

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A Mother's Unique Gifts

*A*s a part of the body of Christ, you have been given unique gifts and qualities that are your strengths, ministries and the way you get closer to God. You can use these qualities during labor to help you rely on the strength of Christ.

1. God formed you with a purpose, and built in unique characteristics that you would need to complete that purpose. (Psalm 57:2, 139:14; Jeremiah 1:5; Acts 13:36)
2. When you became a Christian, the Holy Spirit also bestowed upon you gifts that help you accomplish the purposes God has set for you. (1 Corinthians 12; Hebrews 2:4)
3. You should seek to serve others with your gifts. This includes serving your baby through pregnancy, labor and parenting. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
4. The Lord had blessed the woman with the ability to form an intimately loving relationship with her child. (Isaiah 49:15; John 19:25-27)

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Pregnancy and the Feasts

God has designed the beginning of human life to be a reflection of his design for us by building into the development of your baby a mirror of the feasts he commanded to be celebrated.

1. Passover and Ovulation (releasing of the egg) both occur on the 14th day of the first month. (Leviticus 23:4-8)
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread and the timing of Fertilization (conception) both occur within a seven day time frame after ovulation. (Leviticus 23:4-8)
3. The Feast of the First Fruits and Implantation (the newly formed baby attaching to the uterine wall) both occur along a range of days based on either the Feast of Unleavened Bread or Fertilization. (Leviticus 23: 9-14)
4. The Feast of Weeks and the baby being recognizable as human both occur 50 days after either the Feast of First Fruits or Implantation. (Leviticus 23:15-22)
5. The Feast of Trumpets and the ability to tell the baby can hear by responding to sound both occur at the beginning of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:23-25)
6. The Day of Atonement and the baby's body beginning to increase production of hemoglobin A (adult blood) and decrease production of hemoglobin F (fetal blood) both occur around week 29 (gestation). (Leviticus 23:26-32)
7. The Feast of Tabernacles and the maturation of the baby's lungs enough to live if born both occur around week 30 (gestation). (Leviticus 23:33-38)
8. Chanukah and the baby's birth both occur within a range of days 280 days from the 15th day of the first month.

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Attitude

*Y*our attitude is a mirror of your heart, revealing your spiritual condition. The attitude you have will effect the way your view the events of your life. It will also impact the witness you present about the Lord.

1. Your attitude reveals the state of your heart.
 - a. Your heart should be guarded to keep it focused on Christ. (Proverbs 4:23; Mark 7:21; 2 Corinthians 3:3)
 - b. You are accountable to God for your attitudes, it will be judged by Christ. (John 5:27; Hebrews 4:12)
2. Your attitude is to be that of a servant.
 - a. We are called to love unconditionally. (Mark 12:33; Luke 6:32; John 13:34; Ephesians 4:2; 1 Corinthians 13)
 - b. We are to have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5; 1 Peter 4:1)
3. You are to control your thoughts to keep them righteous.
 - a. Take negative thoughts captive. (2 Corinthians 10:5; Ephesians 4:23)
 - b. Dwell on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report and praiseworthy. (Philippians 4:8; Hebrews 3:1; Colossians 3:1-2)

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Choosing With Love

You will be faced with many decisions about how to give birth and care for your child. As the parent, it is your responsibility to make decisions that will affect the life and health of your child. As a Christian, it is your calling to make these decisions in love, seeking the will of God, rather than what is most convenient or pleasant for you.

1. When you are faced with a decision, you should seek wisdom from God before you choose.
 - a. Man's wisdom and God's wisdom are not the same. (Isaiah 55:8; James 3:15-17)
 - b. God will give you wisdom if you seek it. (Proverbs 2:6, 3:5-7; James 1:5-6)
 - c. The Holy Spirit will guide you. (John 16:13)
2. You may have difficulty recognizing God's wisdom if you:
 - a. Are stubborn or prideful. (Psalm 32:8-9; Proverbs 8:13, 11:2, 16:18)
 - b. Are selfish or insincere in your desire to seek God's will. (Proverbs 18:1; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 12:9; Philippians 2:3; 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22)
3. Your motivation should not be fear of what will happen, the approval of others or the desire to exult yourself, but sacrificial love for your baby.
 - a. We have been commanded to love. (Matthew 22:36-40; Mark 12:31; John 13:34-35)
 - b. Loving others is obedience to God. (John 14:15, 15:13; 1 John 5:3; 2 John 1:6)
4. The decision you make should glorify God. (Psalm 86:12; Romans 15:5-6; 1 Peter 2:12) Decisions made in love and to glorify God should leave you peaceful. Although you may be concerned you should not be overcome with fear, regret or guilt. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Galatians 6:4; 2 Timothy 1:7)

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God is the Designer of Life

*I*t is God who opens the womb, directs the conception, carries the mother and baby through pregnancy and ultimately controls the labor and birth.

1. God commands that humans have children. (Genesis 1:28)
2. God is in control of who will have children.
 - a. God has authority to increase the woman's work in childbearing just as he has the authority to increase the man's work in producing food. (Genesis 3:16-17)
 - b. God is able to open and close wombs as he chooses. (Genesis 20:17-18; Genesis 29:31-32; 30:22-24; 1 Samuel 1:5-6)
 - c. God blesses his people with fruitful wombs. (Deuteronomy 7:13-14, 28:11)
 - d. God can punish by closing a womb. (Genesis 20:18; Hosea 9:14)
3. God is with the child through pregnancy and directs the conception.
 - a. God forms the unborn baby. (Ecclesiastes 11:5; Psalm 139:13)
 - b. God designs each child according to his purpose. (Jeremiah 1:5)
4. God is present at the labor and birth, controlling the events.
 - a. It is with God's help that a child is able to be born. (Genesis 4:1)
 - b. It is God who brings to the point of birth and who delivers the child from the mother. (Isaiah 66:9)
5. God can design his children without our help. (Matthew 3:9)

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Overcoming Fear

*H*eady concern can move you to action; however a sinful fear or worry will paralyze your mind and body and hinder your spiritual growth. You can overcome fear in the same way you would overcome any other fear, confess the sin and fulfill your responsibilities regardless of your feelings.

1. Fear and worry reveal a lack of trust in God and prevent you from serving God.
 - a. You are to trust that God will provide for all of your needs. (Proverbs 3:5-10; Matthew 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-24; Philippians 4:19)
 - b. Fear and worry do not come from God, (2 Timothy 1:7; 1 John 4:18) but from a desire to please yourself rather than God. (Genesis 3:9-10; Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Peter 3:13; 1 John 4:15-18)
 - c. Sinful fear leaves you in bondage (Romans 8:15) preventing you from becoming spiritually mature. (Luke 8:14)
 - d. Fear and worry are gone when love is perfected in you so you can lay down your life for others. (Romans 8:35-39; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:17-18)
2. Fear and worry are overcome in the same way any other sin is overcome.
 - a. Confess your sin to God so you will be forgiven. (Psalm 32:5; Proverbs 28:13; Hebrews 4:15-16; 1 John 1:9) At the same time be sure to seek forgiveness from others you have sinned against, and forgive those who have sinned against you. You should also make restitution. (Numbers 5:6-8; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; James 5:16)
 - b. Take captive our fearful thoughts (2 Corinthians 10:4-5), and instead think godly thoughts. (Matthew 22:37-38; Philippians 4:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Searching for and memorizing scripture can make this easier. (Psalm 19:14; Psalm 119:11; Luke 8:15; Hebrews 4:12)
 - c. Control your tongue so you do not spread fear or worry based on falsehoods, but instead build up other believers in truth and graciousness. (Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29; Colossians 4:6)

Cascade Pregnancy Bible Study Series
Pregnancy Stewardship

Your baby is actually a child of God in your temporary care. As a gift from God, you are to make decisions wisely, seeking God's will and making the best decisions regarding your health and the health of this child.

1. Your baby does not belong to you, but to God.
 - a. Everything and everyone in the world belongs to God. (Psalm 24:1; 50:12)
 - b. Children are a gift given by God. (Genesis 48:9; 1 Chronicles 28:5, Psalm 127:3)
2. As a Christian, you must use the gifts God gives you wisely. (Matthew 25:14-30)
 - a. Using the gifts for God instead of yourself. (Luke 12:15-21)
 - b. Using your gifts to serve others. (Acts 20:35; 1 Peter 4:10)
 - c. When trusted with something, you must prove faithful. (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)
3. You should seek God's guidance when making decisions.
 - a. You make the most of opportunities by knowing God's will. (Ephesians 5:15-17)
 - b. You can ask God for wisdom. (James 1:5)
 - c. What seems acceptable in the human mind, may not be what God has planned. (Proverbs 16:9; Isaiah 55:9)
 - d. When you are acting according to God's guidance, you are acting in faith. (Romans 14:1-4)
4. Even your body does not belong to you, but to God (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), and so making decisions that positively affect your body and physical health is an act of worshiping God. (Romans 12:1)

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Healing

*A*fter a difficult or otherwise upsetting labor, you may find that your soul as well as your body is in need of healing. God is capable of healing your inner and outer wounds if you will allow him to.

1. God can and does heal when you ask Him. (Genesis 20:17; Exodus 15:26; 2 Chronicles 30:20; Psalm 30:2; Matthew 8:7; Matthew 12:22)
2. Confess any sins you may be harboring in your heart, especially as a result of the experience. (Psalm 66:18; Galatians 5:19-21)
 - a. Ungodly anger or bitterness. (Matthew 5:21-22; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:8-9)
 - b. Deceitfulness, jealousy or anxiety. (Proverbs 12:20, 26:24; Matthew 5:27-28; Ephesians 4:25, Galatians 5:20-21; Philippians 4:6-7)
 - c. Pride or arrogance, selfishness. (Proverbs 16:18, 29:23; Philippians 2:3-4)
3. Forgive those who may have sinned against you through the labor, whether their hurt was intentional or accidental. (Mark 11:25; Luke 17:3-4, Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13; 1 Corinthians 13:5)
4. Consider if you need to seek release from bondage or oppression. (Psalm 34:19; Psalm 118:5; Matthew 10:7-8)
5. Pray and read the Bible daily, asking God to increase your faith and rebuild your trust in his design, understanding that your righteousness does not come from how you give birth (works), but by faith. (Luke 17:5; Romans 9:30-32; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 1:24, 5:7; Galatians 2:16)

Cascade Pregnancy Bible Study Series
Parents' Roles and Responsibilities

*T*he Bible gives us guidelines for raising children through basic Biblical Principles and specific instruction to parents. God's main purpose for parents is to teach the children to Love God.

1. To raise your children in a way to please God, you must first commit your life to the Lord.
 - a. You cannot understand the Word of God without a spiritual birth. (1 Corinthians 2:12-14; Ephesians 4:18; 2 Peter 3:16)
 - b. God's Word should be the basis for your life and for the raising of your children. (Deuteronomy 4:9; Proverbs 22:6; Isaiah 55:8-11; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; James 1:22)
2. The parent is to be a godly example, practicing unselfish love, forgiving others, being a godly servant in the same way Christ leads the church. (Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:8-9; Matthew 18:5-7, 20:25-28, John 13:12-17; 1 Corinthians 4:14-16, 11:1; Philippians 2:3-8; Titus 2:7)
3. Parents are not to provoke their children to anger, but to bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Mark 10:42-45; Ephesians 6:4; Philippians 2:3-4; Colossians 3:21)
4. Parents should discipline their children in a loving manner for the purpose of restoring the child to a right relationship with God. (Proverbs 6:23, 19:18; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8; Hebrews 12:5-11; Revelation 3:19) If the child repents, follow God's example and practice gracious compassion. (Deuteronomy 30:2-4; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Psalm 103:10-14)