

# LABOR CHALLENGES

## MAKING WISE DECISIONS

### KNOWING THE TRUTH

How can you be sure what you are deciding is the best option unless you understand the truth about what is happening? There are many variations of normal when it comes to labor. You may be experiencing something that is not average, and still be completely healthy. Knowing what signals a problem and being able to adjust for that problem is a key component to the stewardship of pregnancy.

There are several ways in which you may be challenged during labor. Your goal should be first to learn the difference between a birth emergency

and a normal variation of labor. Then you must understand how to handle the situation so you can respond appropriately.

It is important to remember that making changes in response to a labor challenge may not always give you the desired result. Although certain techniques can be effective, it does not mean they always are. It can take two or three tries before you find what works best.

The process of labor is beautifully simple, yet relies on a complex balance of hormones, movements, contractions and time.

Sometimes adding a new component to the mix can throw off a system that is otherwise working well. You will find it helpful to understand the benefits and risks of any tool available to you in labor so you can prepare for the changes it may bring.

Even if you make appropriate changes, you may not be able to overcome a labor challenge. You can only respond to what is happening, you cannot control your labor. God has a purpose for your labor, even if you do not discover what it is until months later.

### HAVING PEACE

In the midst of uncertainty, you can have peace. The environment does not determine the spirit, the Spirit controls the environment.

Don't confuse safety with peace. Peace is not having everything perfect. Peace is not an uneventful labor. Peace is not the absence of fear or concern. Peace is

trusting in God in the midst of a storm, in the middle of uncertainty, while you are afraid.

When Jonathan approached the Philistines, he understood he could be walking to his death, but he had peace in his decision because he knew whether he lived or died in battle was up to God.

The disciples in the boat with Jesus were frightened as the storm raged, but felt peace when Jesus calmed the storm. It was not their safety that changed, only the part they could see. They were safe in the midst of the storm even if they didn't understand. The ultimate authority of God can bring peace in the midst of your labor challenges.

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

- *Deuteronomy 31:6*  
Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you."
- *1 Chronicles 16:11*  
Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always.
- *Psalms 4:8*  
I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.
- *Psalms 18:32*  
It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect.
- *Psalms 29:11*  
The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.
- *Proverbs 18:13*  
He who answers before listening—that is his folly and his shame.
- *Philippians 4:6-7*  
Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.