

AN UNPLANNED PREGNANCY



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CHOOSING THE BEST FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY

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Unexpectedly facing parenthood can easily become overwhelming, especially if you are young, unmarried, or financially unstable. A baby will change your life dramatically and force you to make decisions that you never thought you'd have to consider.

All the things that are at stake and the heightened emotions that go along with a major life event like pregnancy can leave you feeling confused and afraid. What should you think about as you try to decide the best options for this new life?

CONSIDERATION 1: THE GIFT OF LIFE

Every human life has value regardless of the circumstances. We are all created in the image of God and are fearfully and wonderfully made. All of your days were written in God's book before one of them came to be (Psalm 139:13-16).

Even though you don't know your future or the future of this baby's life, your decisions affect both. Pray that God will help you make choices that preserve His best for you - to experience the full life He offers. As Jesus said, *The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life* (John 10:10).

CONSIDERATION 2: THE RESPONSIBILITIES

If you've chosen to give birth to your baby, you have already taken a heroic step. But that's just the beginning. Now you must decide who will raise this child. There is great responsibility involved in caring for a child in both the short and long term.

Being a parent means learning to lay down your life as a servant for your child (Philippians 2:3-7). This is one of the most difficult things to do, but also one of the most rewarding. Parenthood is a 24/7 endeavor and you will need lots of help regardless of your relationship status. Now is the time to seriously consider who can fill in the gaps because it's more than any one person can handle alone.

Unmarried couples expecting a baby often encounter uncertainty about who will take the most responsibility for the child.

Too often, young fathers walk away from this stress, leaving the new mom with little support. But sometimes young men who want to be involved fathers struggle to find their place when babies often need to remain near to their mothers.

With a lot of work and Biblical counsel, it's possible to make even an unplanned family work. Keep all options on the table and reach out for help from older couples and individuals who understand your situation.

CONSIDERATION 3: THE HOPE OF REDEMPTION

God is in the business of turning situations that feel like a mess into immense blessings. Trust him to work out your situation. In some cases, adoption may be the right thing. If you don't have the support or resources to raise a child right now, giving your child up for adoption can be an answer to prayer for the couple who hopes to adopt children.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Recommended Book

I'm Pregnant - Now What? (by Ruth Graham, daughter of evangelist Billy Graham, speaking from her own experience and co-author Sara Dormon, Ph.D.) brings insight to help women come up with an informed, workable plan for an

Recommended Websites

Optionline.org offers trained consultants who can provide direction as well as connections to local pregnancy centers staffed to give you Biblical and confidential care.

Myhope.org connects you to local help to make informed and healthy choices. Hope Resource Center of McKinney provides one-on-one peer guidance for women who are pregnant or think they may be pregnant. Guidance is also provided for any significant others who would like to be served.

Crisispregnancy.com offers an exhaustive collection of articles and links regarding your pregnancy and support for each step.