

What About Sterilization?

Cutting off Your Fruitfulness And Blessings from God



Following the Tide

"Be fruitful and multiply" was the first commandment that God gave to mankind. It has never been rescinded. But many couples in today's society have chosen to limit the number of children they bear for various reasons. Finances usually top the list followed by feelings of inadequacy to provide enough love, time, education, room, or material things for their existing children. Health concerns for the mother are also sometimes high on the list. These are all very logical reasons and the validity of these concerns is further examined in light of scripture in another pamphlet (What About Trusting God?). Couples desiring to not have any more children are choosing to have the "problem" resolved permanently. The purpose of this study is to delve into whether or not surgical sterilization is safe and healthy, physically and spiritually, and what to do if the damage has already been done.

Joining the "Snipper Club" Bandwagon

This term, although offensive to some who have chosen sterilization, was nonetheless coined by those who are proud members and it has been circulating among Christian circles. Those who have not yet "joined the club" are often approached when they arrive at church with baby #2 or #3 and asked if they know what causes that and if they've gotten that "problem fixed" yet. But the men are not always to blame. We have witnessed two pastors in a very large, prosperous church ask their wives publicly if they could have another little one only to be adamantly told NO in front of the congregation. Could there possibly be a slight submission problem going on? But among both the men and the women, the harshest and most vocal critics of Christians who leave their childbearing up to God are other Christians who have been sterilized.

What are the Long Term Consequences?

The majority of couples who have chosen sterilization have young children and are overwhelmed at the thought of having any more. They are feeling the pressure of family and friends and the harriedness of everyday life with small children. But children are not small forever and the childbearing years do not last forever.

Unfortunately the health ramifications of "messing with the plumbing" will last. Many studies have come out linking vasectomies and tubal ligations with a host of long-term health problems. A prominent study in the Journal of the American Medical Association (Giovannucci et al, 1993, "A Retrospective Cohort Study of Vasectomy and Prostate Cancer in U.S. Men") demonstrated a 56% overall increase in risk of prostate cancer among men who had undergone a vasectomy and an 89% increase of risk among men whose procedures were 22 years old or longer.

Some of the other problems mentioned for vasectomy are: Arthritis, multiple sclerosis, migraines, allergies, impaired sexual function, kidney stones, angina pectoris and myocardial infraction, abscess of the liver and abscesses of the skin, recurrent sinusitis and recurrent virus infections, auto-immune diseases, hypoglycemia, and diabetes.

For tubals the list includes: severe cramps, heavier periods that are shorter or longer and irregular, dysfunctional uterine bleeding that can last for years, infections, abnormal hormone production and imbalances, painful intercourse, pelvic pain, ovarian cysts, endometriosis, hysterectomy, emotional imbalances, and auto-immune diseases such as lupus and fibromyalgia.

Those who have experienced health problems usually attest to the fact that their doctor did not forewarn them that there was a possibility of physical complications associated with the procedure. Some were even reassured that no problems had ever been reported!

Here are two testimonies that represent what has happened to many families:

"My husband had a vasectomy after our 4th child because WE decided we were done. In the years following he had all the side effects that have been previously discussed: constant pain, prostate infections, and "just not quite the same", unlike the surgeon promised. I was doing some research on side effects of vasectomies and found that these are VERY common. The surgeon never mentioned them, in fact he said there were none. In the mean time God convicted us both on letting him be in control and we decided to pursue a reversal. The surgeon who did the reversal was a Christian and he was very honest and up-front about the fact that the reversal may not remove the side effects due to the years it had been and the possible scar tissue. Thanks to the Lord, that he saw fit to not only make the reversal successful but my husband also has not had any of the side effects since two weeks post surgery. We are expecting our first reversal baby in July. We are thankful that God has given us another blessing and the peace that comes from obedience. My husband is now a strong advocate of not messing up what God designed perfectly. God can use anything, even our mistakes as a ministry. Some of my husband's friends who are Christian men have sought him out for advice because they are considering a vasectomy. He has been able to use our experience as a tool for the Lord. What better person to get Vasectomy advice from than a man who has been there and back. Praise the Lord in all things even our mistakes." ~Carie in Maine

"The Lord led us to Dr. David Brewer, a gifted micro-surgeon, committed to the ministry of restoring a woman's reproductive system. He was very hopeful for a successful reconnection of my fallopian tubes. Three long years and one week after my tubal ligation, I was in surgery with Dr. Brewer to have my tubes reconnected. I had always taken my body for granted, but after reversal surgery, I came away with a deep appreciation of the body that my Lord made for me. My fallopian tubes can never be restored as perfectly as God formed them. In fact, x-rays reveal that they are rather shortened and some doctors speculate that this in itself hurries the journey of the fertilized egg too quickly through the tube to the womb. God made our bodies in such ways that even the medical community doesn't fully comprehend how the length of the fallopian tube affects the journey of the baby to the womb...

I have watched three anniversaries of my reversal surgery come and go and still there is no baby in our home. In a period of 21 months I have been pregnant four times and the Lord chose for those babies to arrive home in His arms and not mine. At times I was sure that I was only hanging on to my Lord by a thread. "Father God, " I prayed, "I obeyed you and it cost me so much. Why, Lord, have you not allowed a baby to remain in my womb? Why, Lord?" In the face of each miscarriage, I have been painfully reminded that before my sterilization my body worked beautifully....

During my fourth miscarriage, Dr. Brewer prayed with me and suggested that we see a Reproductive Immunologist. For the first time in over three years, we now have some answers. It seems that my body has been attacking the baby, when it should have been protecting the baby. My body cannot seem to discern that a baby is a group of 'good cells.' As I sat in Dr. Brewer's office reviewing my treatment for this problem, he became very quiet. Minutes ticked by and then he spoke. "Do you suppose that this immunological problem was a result of your sterilization? We know that a man who has undergone a vasectomy begins to attack and kill his own sperm cells." He paused and went on, "The ramifications of this would be phenomenal."

The consequences of tubal ligation are very real. Between 20 percent and 40 percent of women suffer from post tubal ligation syndrome which means that women are experiencing increased pain with periods, abnormally short or long menstrual cycles, severe PMS and Pelvic pain. In addition, women who have undergone a tubal ligation end up having a hysterectomy much sooner than women who were not sterilized.

Every day for over five years I have had to live with the physical ramifications from my sterilization, but the emotional and spiritual consequences are even greater. 1 Corinthians 3:16,17 says, "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are."...No one ever warned us about the consequences of sterilization. Our way is NOT better than God's. We will never again refuse God's most precious blessing, the gift of a baby." ~Sherrie in Idaho

So What if it's "Too Late?"

For some of you reading this, the deed has already been carried out. What next? Maybe you are experiencing some of the problems that were mentioned and maybe you are as healthy as a horse and wondering what all the fuss is about. Keep in mind that many times the health problems manifested themselves further down the road, but you might never experience a health problem. For others, you are currently contemplating sterilization for whatever reasons. Be sure to check out all the facts, go online and read some of the testimonies and most importantly, PRAY about what God would have you do. Are there any moral or spiritual implications to your decision? Many do not seek the Lord when they make their childbearing choices. They just do what everyone else is doing. Maybe now is the time to start. We leave you with a few Bible verses to meditate on.

***Proverbs 14:12** *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death"*

***Proverbs 3:5** *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths."*

***Romans 12:1** *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

***1 Corinthians 6:19-20** *"What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."*

***Psalms 37:25** *"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."*

***1 Chronicles 25:5** *"All these were the sons of Heman the king's seer in the words of God, to exalt his horn. For God gave Heman fourteen sons and three daughters."*

***1 Chronicles 26:4-5** *"Obed-edom had eight sons "for God blessed him."*

***Psalm 127** *"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat- for he grants sleep to those he loves. Children are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are the children born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies at the gate."*

***Psalm 128** *"Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways. You will eat the fruit of your labor; blessings and prosperity will be yours. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your sons will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus is the man blessed who fears the Lord. May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel."*

***Isaiah 55:8-9** *"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."*

***Malachi 2:15** *"And did not He make one? Having a remnant of the Spirit. And why one? He seeks godly offspring. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth."*

Reading, Resources and Support

Full Quiver (Family Planning and the Lordship of Christ) by Rick Hess, Jan Hess (The original 1990 Wolgemuth & Hyatt edition, ISBN 0-943497-83-3, is now out of print.) A current, reprinted edition is sold directly by the authors for \$10 postpaid USA. Rick & Jan Hess 7014 Chandler Acres Dr, Bellevue NE 68147. Telephone (402) 731-6654

A Change of Heart, God's Vision For Families, & The Power of Motherhood by Nancy & Colin Campbell.
<http://www.aboverubies.org>

Abortion in the Church by Pastor Max Latham
Children: Blessing or Burden by Max Heine
Letting God Plan Your Family by Samuel A. Owen, Jr.,
Yes, They're All Ours by Rick Boyer, father of 13.
The Way Home & All the Way Home by Mary Pride
The Bible and Birth Control by Charles Proven.

www.quiverfull.com Resource site for more info

Unless The Lord magazine 27959 Mellman Road, Hempstead, TX 77445,
<http://www.unlessthe lordmagazine.com>

Does the Birth Control Pill Cause Abortions? By Randy Alcorn
http://epm.org/artman2/publish/prolife_birth_control_pill/index.shtml

<http://www.vvm.com/~birons/birthctl.htm> A case against birth control

www.vasreversal.net Resource page for those seeking reversal info

<http://ccli.org> Couple to Couple League info page

http://members.tripod.com/~sterilization_rights/Symtoms_PTS.html This site has excellent information and links to post tubal syndrome and medical articles on it.

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