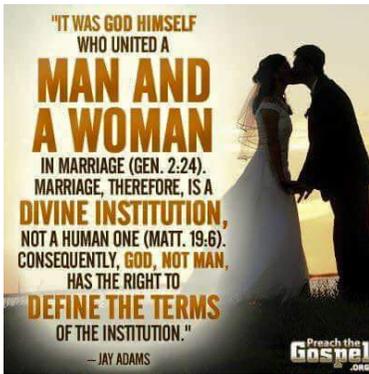


Babies – Who Decides: God or Man? – Introduction and Part 1



I am speaking to you today on a truth that, apart from here, you may not hear much about. What I am about to present is not in our day a majority view among Christians. In fact, it is not even a large minority view among Christians. What I am going to present over the next few weeks during this hour is at best a fringe view in our day. It may even be seen – and likely is – as a view that is given no thought whatsoever, because of its lack of popularity. This is the Biblical Watershed Issue of the Biblical view of birth control. It is the question of whether we have or do not have a God-given right to manipulate God’s design for marriage by using birth control.

When I speak of “birth control,” this includes conception control (preventing a baby from being conceived), the broader use of abortifacients (methods which actually do not prevent conception, but prevent a conceived child from being implanted in the mother’s womb), and outright abortion itself. I believe today’s view stems from an unbiblical view of children, and results in the present unbiblical view to prevent child or to discard them.

My presentation of this view will primarily address the Biblical idea that it is God that rightfully has the place of deciding whether humans are conceived, rather than man making that decision.

I ask a few things. (1) Please listen to what I have to say. You can always toss away any man’s argument. However, if you do not understand the arguments first, you have not heard the evidence before making up your mind. (2) Please weigh what I have to say. I am not offering opinion here, but Biblical evidence to be considered – and I believe there is much evidence in the Bible. (3) Please think about what I have to say. Take your time, and process this information before discounting it. Because of the absence of such teaching, it will be foreign to most of you, and it is easy to set aside what we have not heard, or what we have been made biased against by the very flow of culture, including Christian culture.

May I remind you – if this helps you at least stop and consider what I say – that throughout time the trend of the human race, human culture, the nation Israel, and the Church, has been to move away from God. Rarely have the majority been right; rarely have the majority been on God’s side. We see this in the destruction of the human race in the flood. We see this in the constant drift of Israel throughout the Old Testament and during Jesus’ time on earth in the New Testament. We see this in the Epistles, where the writers are constantly admonished to get on a correct course and obey God. We see this throughout the entire history of the church, where over and over Christian groups abandon the truth, denominations abandon core beliefs, and churches jettison what the Bible teaches. Throughout history, the majority has rarely held to God’s truth.

In general, very, very few hold to any such view for God’s control of conception in our time. This has not always been the case. In fact, until 1930, every stripe of Christian teaching was against the practice of contraception and birth control.

Sherif Girgis, a research scholar at the Witherspoon Institute, shares this summary in the introduction of his August 2016 article entitled “The Historic Christian Teaching Against Contraception: A Defense.” Girgis begins:

Forty-eight years ago last month, our story reached a dramatic climax. But it began in the dawn of Christianity, with a document called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (or Didache). Written thirty to fifty years after Christ’s death, it gives the earliest evidence of a Christian condemnation of contraception. For the next 1900 years, it was the view of every Christian body—East and West, Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox—that contraception by spouses was immoral. (Its use outside of marriage wasn’t much discussed since non-marital sex was deemed sinful anyway.) It was even denounced, vociferously, by Reformers such as Luther and Calvin. In 1930, but only then, a single Protestant denomination cracked open the door to spousal contraception—but only for serious reasons. Soon, however, that and almost every other denomination had flung it wide open.

Even Albert Mohler, president of the largest Southern Baptist seminary, highlights this. In his article “Defending God’s Design for Marriage,” he states:

God created us as sexual beings with a reproductive capacity. There's no division between sexuality and reproductive capacity. When these are untied, there's all kinds of room for all sorts of mischief.

We've separated sex from reproduction, but we've also separated reproduction from sex. So you've got lesbian couples buying sperm on the Internet and you've got gay male couples buying more than that, they need a womb. We invent all sorts of ways to do evil.

Though I believe some of Dr. Mohler's ideas and conclusions are inconsistent, He highlights how this has surfaced in the newer issues we are facing in this present hour regarding marriage itself, largely because of our views on children.

Again, I simply ask for your kind attention and your thoughtful consideration of what I will present. You can and will draw your own conclusions, which indeed affect every view of your life, career, church, and world.

I will do my best to cover several concepts found in Scripture. These will, in the least, include the following:

- Procreation's Pronouncement (design and mandate)
- Procreation's Process (God is involved)
- Procreation's Privilege (God calls children a blessing)
- Procreation's Promise (God must preside over generations to fulfill His blessings and promises of offspring)
- Procreation's Pinnacle (God controlled the birth of Jesus)
- Procreation's Pattern (Both from the OT and the NT)
- Procreation's Purpose (godly offspring)

Today, I will briefly address the "elephant in the room" of the Bible: Procreation's Pronouncement, found in the very first chapter of the Bible, Genesis 1.

Gen. 1:27-28 So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. ²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

God gave five commands in Verse 28. Let me answer three questions regarding these five commands.

A. What Are They?

1. **Authorizations** (The **Right** to Do These) God gave us **permission** to carry out these five blessings.
2. **Blessings** (The **Privilege** to Do These) God considers each of these 5 as **good** and **desirable**.
3. **Commands** (The **Responsibility** to Do These) Each is an **imperative** – a command.
4. **Directions** (The **Path** Which Will Be Taken) Each is a **course** set in motion by God that will be followed.
5. **Enablements** (The **Ability** to Do These) God gave us the **capacity** and **desire** to do the things commanded.

B. What Do They Mean?

The first three directly involve procreation (bearing children). The last two involve man's relationship to God's creation (specifically the earth, and the creatures within it).

1. **Be Fruitful** (to bear fruit) – to **have children**
2. **Multiply** (to become many, to become numerous) – to have **numerous** children
3. **Fill the Earth** (to fill) – to have numerous children to the point of eventually **filling** the **earth**
4. **Subdue It** (to take control of) – to become **master** over the earth, and be **responsible** for it
5. **Have Dominion** – to rule **over** the **creatures** of the earth

C. Are They for Today? (Do They Apply to Us Today?): 12 Reasons for "Yes"

1. (A) **Practice** – We still practice each as though we have permission to do so (if not for today, why still do them?)
2. (B) **Blessing** – They continue to be something that is good in God's eyes (a blessing).

- Each of these is still something to be considered a privilege, something good & desirable.

- Example: Throughout Scripture, God blessed and cursed by means of children (no change from Gen 1).

Gen 17:20 – And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Deut 1:11 – May the LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!

1 Chron 26:4-5 – Moreover the sons of Obed-Edom [were] Shemaiah the firstborn, Jehozabad the second, Joah the

third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth, Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth; for God blessed him.

Job 42:12-13 – Now the LORD blessed the latter [days] of Job more than his beginning; for he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters.

Psalms 107:38 – He also blesses them, and they multiply greatly; And He does not let their cattle decrease.

Psalms 107:41 – Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction, And makes [their] families like a flock.

Psalms 127:3-5 – Behold, children [are] a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb [is] a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So [are] the children of one's youth. Happy [is] the man who has his quiver full of them; They shall not be ashamed, But shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

3. (C) **No Condition** Is Stated – “Be fruitful UNTIL this specific state or condition is met, etc. ...”
4. (C) **No Timeframe** Is Given – “Be Fruitful UNTIL this specific time...”
5. (C) **No Reversal** – Cancellation – There are no commands from God to rescind, repeal, or revoke any of these 5 blessings. (Human argument & logic is insufficient to counter God’s commands. Many seek to do so for all of God’s commands.)
6. (D) **No Ceasing** – Cessation – There is no evidence of any of these five stopping. (Executive; laws of nature)
7. (E) **Continuing** – Continuation – The enablement for each continues. We still are able to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, subdue the earth, and to have dominion over fish, birds, and all living creatures. (Hamburger?)
8. **Repeating** – Repetition – Some commands are repeated. Others are never repeated.
Gen 9:1 – So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth."
Gen 9:7 – And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it."
Gen 35:11 – Also God said to him: "I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall proceed from you, and kings shall come from your body."
Non-Repeating – Subdue is only commanded HERE, and “have dominion” only HERE in this context.
9. **Incomplete** – Completion – The world is not full, fully subdued, nor can it be once & for all ruled. (Side Note: There is no hint that the world’s problem is overpopulation and its results, but the Bible clearly teaches that God is the Supplier, and the world’s problem is sin and rebellion, with the resultant judgment from a holy God.)
10. **Necessary** – Necessity – We cannot survive or function without any of them. The human race would die out in one generation (first three) or in days (last two).
11. **Partial** – Inconsistency – People still embrace the last two (without hesitation or question). Our claim to the right (or authorization) to any necessitates our acceptance of all 5.
12. **Connected** – Connection – They seem to rise and fall with marriage, not just a time in Genesis.

The passage is an overview of the creation of the first man and woman, and it encompasses Genesis 2 as well. God spoke all of the blessings to THEM, which would have required the blessings to be given after the woman was created at the end of Genesis 2.

²⁷ So God created man in His [own] image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created **them**.²⁸
Then God blessed **them**, and God said to **them**, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

It would appear that Genesis 2:7-25 would fit after the third clause of 1:27 (“male and female He created **them**”), and before Verse 28. It is textually accurate, and also logical and rather obvious that that the commands to “be fruitful and multiply” would be given **after** the creation of both the male and the female, and thus after the events described in Genesis 2.

If Genesis 2 lays any lasting demands on us by pattern and principle (which it obviously does, given that the passage is referred to over and over again in the New Testament), then it would seem that the blessings of 1:28 would equally be relevant and applicable for today. You cannot separate chronologically what is chronologically a unit.