



Considering Children

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Adapted by *Greenville Oaks Church of Christ*

If you are thinking about starting a family, you may be overwhelmed by the messages you receive about what it means to be “ready.”

Our culture often emphasizes the financial costs and personal sacrifices associated with having children, leading us to believe that we need a good-sized nest egg and/or to achieve certain professional goals before we’re ready. The faith community, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of spiritual responsibility. But even this can be daunting, given that so many of us have yet to reach the spiritual maturity we feel parenting requires.

Here’s the thing: we can’t ever completely *be ready* for children. God has grand and often mysterious purposes for children within marriage that even the most prepared couples will not anticipate.

Instead of solely contemplating readiness, couples might benefit from a discussion around these important questions:

QUESTION ONE: Are Children Part of Your Life’s Purpose?

Not every couple is called to have children. Having children isn’t the only purpose of marriage, as evidenced by the many infertile couples (and also “childless by choice” couples) who found beneficial ways of passing their faith on through community service and fellowship with other believers.

But while having children through conception or adoption isn’t the only purpose for marriage, it should not be discarded without serious, prayerful reflection. Producing and guiding the next generation is a mission that stretches us and pushes us to depend on God like few other things in life, all the while revealing and shaping our larger purpose within God’s plan for humanity.

QUESTION TWO: Are Children a Blessing or a Burden?

It’s a fact that children bring stress. But God calls children a blessing (Psalm 127:3-5). Even in the face of what one writer called the “bone-wearying work” of parenting, children provide the joyful reward of marital and parental love. Parents often discover a better understanding of God’s love for His people through the experience of loving their own children.

QUESTION THREE: How Long Should You Wait?

Magazine covers that feature wealthy celebrities having babies well into their forties can give couples the impression they have plenty of time to start their families.

Unfortunately, those images don’t match the biological and financial realities of most couples. And while there are some good, solid reasons to ignore the “ticking biological clock,” couples who intentionally wait until they are more financially secure might find themselves facing the painfully ironic decision of how much to spend on fertility treatments.



QUESTION FOUR: Who is Your Provider?

Parenthood is frightening. Babies change *everything* and push couples beyond themselves.

But God is faithful. Paul told the Corinthians, *And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work* (2 Corinthians 9:8). Having children gives couples new opportunities to see how God is able to supply what they need.

GOING FURTHER - Resources

Recommended Book:

Available for checkout at the Faith@Home Center or for purchase online.

Start Your Family (by Steve & Candice Watters) provides inspiration for those considering children and practical insights from his and her perspectives.

Recommended Websites:

The "Having a Baby" topic on TroubledWith.com provides encouragement and insights about making the transition from just the two of you to a "three-family." It includes practical advice for the pregnant season as well as information about what life will be like once the baby arrives.

GOING FURTHER – Church Support

Pastoral Care

Greenville Oaks Shepherds and Ministers are here for you. Email info@greenvilleoaks.org and ask to be contacted by a Shepherd or Minister.