

“My Husband Wants to Put Our Daughter on Birth Control!”

Help! During a casual child raising discussion, I found out that my husband insists on putting our (unborn) daughter on birth control when she enters high school. He claims that it is the best thing “just in case” she gets caught up in temptation – he does not want her to “ruin” her life by having a baby so young nor does he want to raise the child for her. I tried to express my disagreement with the idea, indicating that I believe that placing her on birth control is a form of condoning the behavior and I do not want to give that impression to her. I even tried to use an analogy of telling her not to use drugs, but giving her a clean pipe to carry around “just in case” she is at a party one night and is tempted to smoke crack! Of course he saw the drugs as completely different, and he insists that birth control is the way to go. Your personal input backed by theological soundness is greatly appreciated.

I answer your question both as a mom and as someone who ministered to high school girls for several years.

First of all, you can relax. Making policy about unborn children is something lots of parents do and it completely changes when reality sets in.

Secondly, the cross-gender relationship between your husband and his little girl is going to be very different from what he expects. If he's like most fathers he's going to be extremely protective of her, and that means looking at the young men she hangs around with a very wary eye. Instead of putting her on birth control, there's an even better chance he'll have an eyeball-to-eyeball little “chat” with her male friends and let them know how he expects them to take extremely good care of her and that means not touching her sexually in ANY way. (With

some dads, that “chat” happens without words by giving them the evil eye. . .<smile>)

Your drug analogy was really very good even if he blew you off about it. Here’s another one: what if he bought a Lamborghini that he kept in the garage, washed and waxed every week, was absolutely obsessive-compulsive about keeping it maintained to perfection. . . and then, when you daughter got her license at 16, said, “Here are the keys, honey, and of course, I got you insurance because you might get in a wreck but hey—no big deal. I expect you to wreck a car the first year of driving.” Uhh....I’m thinkin’, NOT!!! <grin>

When parents get their teenagers birth control, they are making a statement about having low expectations of their kids. It’s amazing that we can expect that kids will exercise tremendous self-discipline for sports or academics, but when it comes to sexual activity we assume they are incapable of it! It’s entirely possible to start talking about the treasure of virginity and the importance of maintaining modesty as soon as kids are old enough to know what they are, and build a protective wall of positive expectations that help the kids maintain their purity. It has been a joy to see both our teenage sons accept a chastity ring and the challenge to stay virgins until they get married, and to fight the temptations of the flesh out of their own convictions. In other words, it CAN be done.

When my husband and I were growing up, we were told “Just say no” to sex, but not given any reasons why. When it was our turn to parent, we explained how God’s word tells us to keep the marriage bed pure and condemns fornication (sexual immorality), which is any kind of sexual activity outside of marriage. As Josh McDowell communicates in his “Right From Wrong” conferences and book, God’s commands are given to both *protect* us from harm and *provide* us with good. We talked to our kids about sexually transmitted diseases (and showed them really gross photos of diseased sexual organs from the [Medical](#)

[Institute for Sexual Health](http://www.medinstitute.org/) [http://www.medinstitute.org/], where Ray got training for giving lectures on STDs). We also told them that sex in marriage is worth waiting for.

We understand that our kids will make their own decisions about these things, but we gave them all the ammunition to fight temptation (and a culture that is absolutely saturated in sex) that we could.

The great news is that parents today have more help [for example, [Aim for Success](http://www.aimforsuccess.org/) at http://www.aimforsuccess.org] in assisting their kids to value purity and chastity than ever before, especially in the church. I hope that by the time your daughter is old enough to handle this issue, there will be even more!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“What If You Disagree with the Catholic Church About Birth Control?”

I have a friend who is a devout Catholic. She is torn about birth control in her marriage. Her priest has told her it is a mortal sin to use birth control. The few scripture references she was given, I had a rebuttal to, but I am looking for a way to help her through this crisis. This is really beginning to affect her marriage, since she and her husband do not want any

more children. I would appreciate any guidance you could give us.

Dear _____,

Well, your friend has a choice to make. The position of the Catholic Church is that birth control is sin. There are many other people who are completely committed to the Bible and to a biblical world view who see freedom to use birth control in the context of submitting to Christ and actively seeking to know His personal will for them. (We mean here contraception, preventing an egg from being fertilized so no new human being comes into existence.)

Your friend will have to choose either the church's position or her own conscience after spending time in prayer (and, may I suggest, fasting) about this issue. I say this very gently and respectfully: there are lots of people (my husband and I included) who no longer accept the Catholic Church's authority, understanding that we can go directly to Christ for instruction and direction (1 Tim. 2:5). Your friend needs to ask herself if she can live with that. I suggest that's it's not enough to reject the church's authority simply to pursue whatever we want and think will make us happy (been there, done that—it doesn't work!); the only wise course of action is to pursue what will bring glory to God through our obedience to His word and Spirit.

I send this with a prayer for heavenly wisdom (James 3) for your friend, and for you as you help her walk this out.

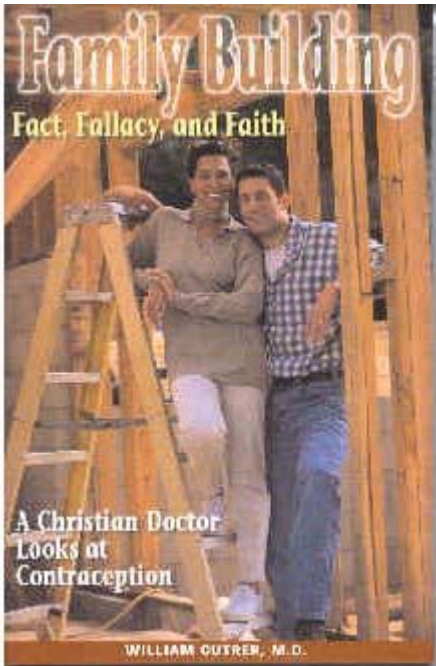
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“What is the Pervading Christian Thought on Birth Control?”

I have a question about birth control. Until recently, I was under the impression that being on “the pill” meant that a woman did not ovulate and therefore, could not get pregnant. Upon some research, I was horrified to find out that women taking the pill can actually ovulate up to 50% of the time. When this occurs, the egg is harder to fertilize, but if it does become fertilized, the lining of the uterus will not allow the zygote to be attached, therefore causing the zygote to be aborted without the woman ever knowing it.

What is the pervading Christian thought on this? My husband and I are not Catholic, and we do not have a problem with birth control, but if it is essentially working like the morning after pill I want nothing to do with it. We were both surprised that no church other than the Catholic church has taken a stance on this.

There IS no pervading Christian thought on this issue. There is no pervading thought even among Christian OB-GYNs, it turns out. The reason is that they truly don't know the pill's effect on the uterine lining and just exactly how abortifacient it is. There is no data to support the claim that the pill causes miscarriages. It would be very helpful if such data existed!



I read an excellent booklet by Dr. Bill Cutrer about a Christian perspective on birth control (*Family Building: Fact, Fallacy and Faith*) and he didn't say anything about women on the pill ovulating up to 50% of the time. Frankly, I am suspicious of that claim for more than a few women. He also said that a fertilized embryo is amazingly able to start growing in the most inhospitable environments, such as the fallopian tubes, intestines and even spleen, so the abortifacient characteristics of COC (combination oral contraceptives) are not absolute.

His perspective is that couples should be aware of the risks of the pill to both the mother and the unborn baby, and alternative contraceptives should be considered. The evidence is not as strong as some would make it out to be, but nonetheless other forms of contraception would be good to discuss.

I hope this helps; I would suggest you get the pamphlet and read it for yourself (you can order it from FamilyLife at www.familylife.com).

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