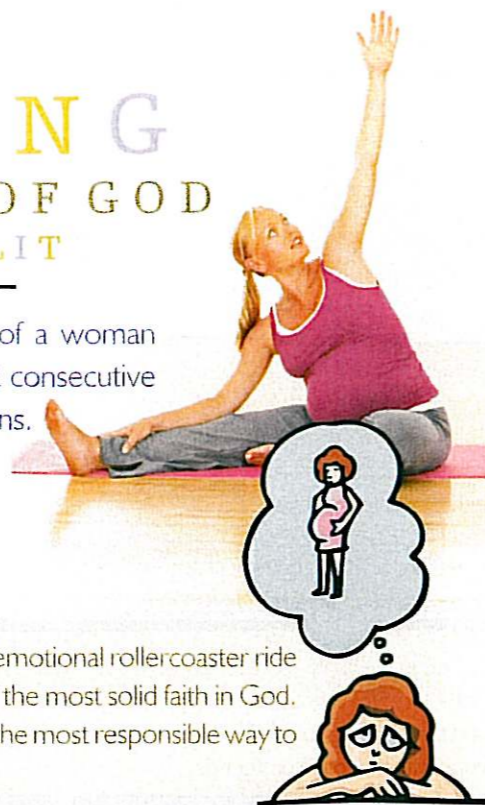




FINDING THE PEACE OF GOD IN INFERTILITY

Infertility refers to the inability of a woman to fall pregnant naturally after 12 consecutive months of trying by natural means.



Infertility can challenge a person of any faith, race or gender and can see you take an emotional rollercoaster ride of a lifetime that can shake the foundations of the strongest marriage and a person of the most solid faith in God. Yet somehow, a child of God will be required to find their way on this difficult road... the most responsible way to do that would be to revert to the timeless word of God.

IS IT IN THE WILL OF GOD FOR EACH OF HIS CHILDREN TO BE BLESSED WITH CHILDREN?

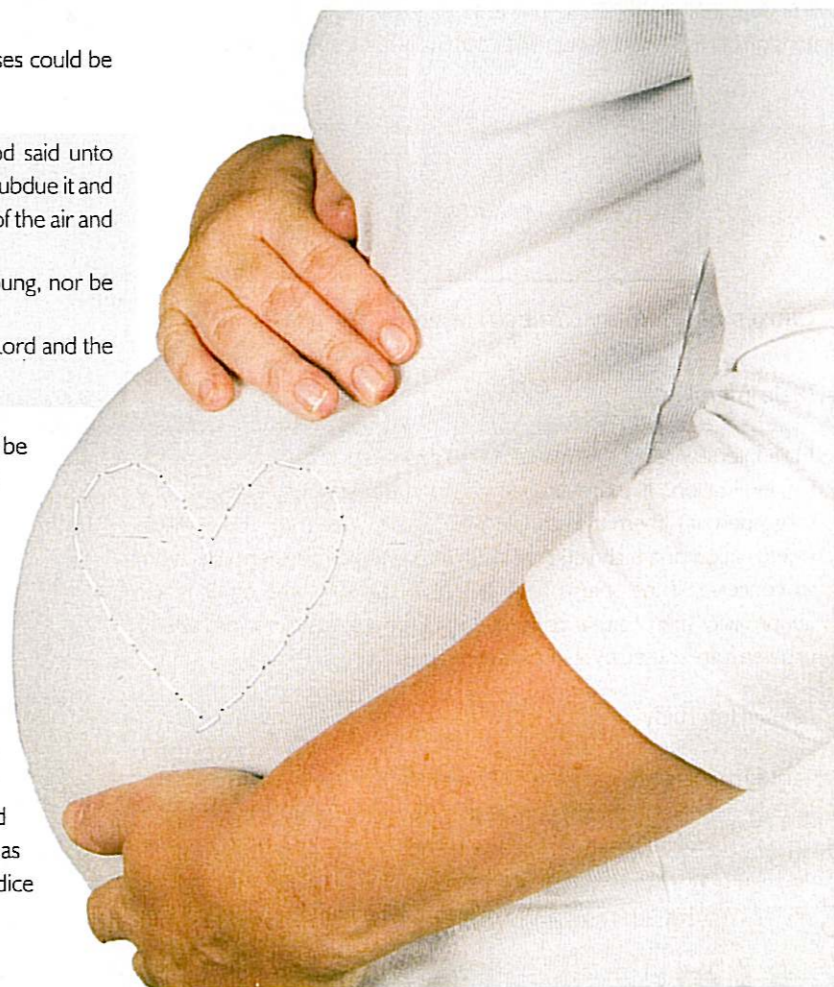
If one searches the scriptures, the following relevant verses could be highlighted, amongst others:

- a) Genesis 1.28 declares "And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth";
- b) Exodus 23.26 declares "There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy land; the number of thy days I will fulfil";
- c) Psalm 127.3 declares "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord and the fruit of the womb is His reward";

While it is the will of God for the holy institution of marriage to be blessed by children, many spiritual, emotional and physical challenges may either delay or prevent a couple from actually conceiving their biological child. Physical challenges may range from male fertility factors such as a low sperm count, high sugar count, or semen with no sperm therein. Female fertility factors include, amongst others, endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, polycystic ovarian syndrome, hyperthyroidism, and hypothyroidism.

Emotional blockages may emanate from traumatic experiences during a person's childhood that were never dealt with and remain unresolved in adulthood eg. if a child grew up in an abusive marriage, he/she may "vow" repeatedly as a child never to bring an innocent child into a world of prejudice and uncertainty.

(Continued overleaf)

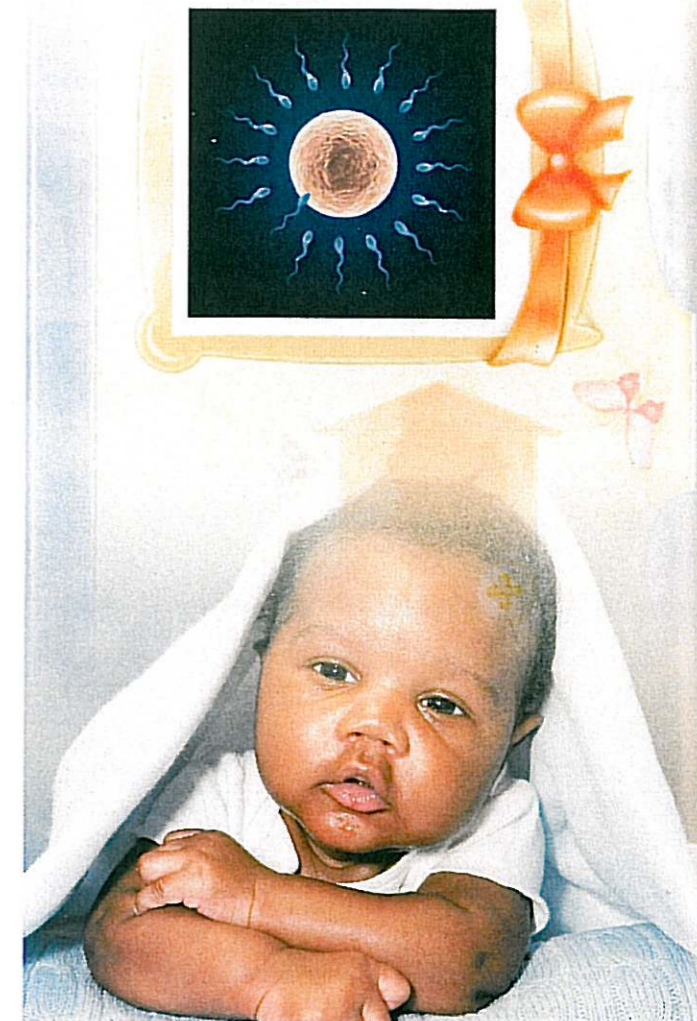


Our walk with God requires us to glorify Him in all stages of our lives at all times. This includes our darkest hour when a prayer is not yet answered and the situation looks hopeless. Yet, a child of God is required to find their way in that darkness by reverting to the only unchanging factor in their lives, namely the word of God, and searching the scriptures for the Lord's hand in the situation. Jeremiah 33.3 declares "Call unto me and I will show you great and mighty things that you do not know". We know that the Lord is faithful and that His promises will not return unto Him unfulfilled. Hebrews 11.1 declares "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen". Down the road of infertility, a couple will need to have faith, the size of a grain of a mustard seed, to see their sincere prayers for a child answered.

Many families have related how they felt led to adopt an abandoned baby only to be blessed by a biological child thereafter. Adoption is not the solution to infertility and if not approached with a sound mind and agreement by both parties, could result in ultimately hurting the adopted child as one party resents the other for forcing a choice upon him/her. Any couple that contemplates adoption must undergo professional counseling either privately or by the adoption agency to ensure that they understand that adoption is a lifelong commitment.

The word of God reveals accounts of many women who were barren and subsequently gave birth to a biological child, albeit in old age eg. Sarah and Abraham. Couples that are challenged by infertility are encouraged to surround themselves with a healthy support system as the road is filled with potholes. Joining support groups, being surrounded by prayer at all times and surrounding yourself with a positive environment will help a couple to cope with the rollercoaster ride.

A couple challenged by infertility that does not buckle under the pressure of medical intervention and judgemental remarks and ultimately end their marriage in divorce but who chooses to glorify God in ALL things, will undoubtedly share an inspiring testimony of His goodness towards the extension of His Kingdom when the road finally comes to an end!



CAUSES OF INFERTILITY



Causes of infertility can be related to the female or male.

Male Infertility

Male Infertility results from an inability to produce sufficient motile sperm for fertilization. If there are no sperm (azoospermia) or very few (oligospermia) then the couple will usually need to use Artificial Insemination or a technique like ICSI (Intracytoplasmic sperm injection) to conceive. If the sperm have defective tails or some other major abnormality then natural conception will be impossible. Most severe problems are caused by abnormal genes or chromosomes.

Female Infertility

Total female infertility results from either tubal damage or some condition (usually genetic or chromosomal) that permanently inhibits ovulation. There could be an absence of eggs or some other developmental defect. However, however if there is difficulty getting pregnant but no tubal damage and there are cycles of some sort, whether long or irregular or

low in mucus or they don't match temperature charts or you can't detect ovulation with home kits, it is very likely that the problem can be addressed by changes in lifestyle.

Causes of Infertility

- * Immunological Infertility
- * Hormonal Infertility
- * Unexplained Infertility
- * Tubal Ligation
- * Male Causes
- * Ovulatory Dysfunction
- * Tubal Infertility
- * Endometriosis
- * Surgical Infertility
- * Other Conditions
- * Repeated Loss