

Is Birth Control Biblical?

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

Question: Ok, No. 4, Allen: "Is birth control Biblical? I mean, if we should trust God in all things, isn't it kind of wrong to say, 'Hey, God, I don't want you to bless us with a kid, so we're going to use birth control.' I'm very confused about which way to go with this. My wife and I."

Discussion:

Tim: You guys want my take on it? Here it is. This is an important hermeneutical principle. If you're not familiar with what hermeneutics is, basically it's the study of Biblical interpretation. You want to know about proper Biblical interpretation? And this is my take. Especially as a pastor at the church. When the Bible is dogmatic about something and gives clear examples and clear commandments and clear principles, I am going to be clear; as clear as I can be, as clear as God gives me grace to be. And when it's dogmatic, I'm going to be dogmatic. When things seem to be obscure, when things are not so clearly dealt with, then I am not going to be as dogmatic. I am going to back away. I may give some opinions. I will point out some principles to be considered where God's Word gives plain commandments. I am going to insist upon it. But where it is vague, I am not going to be overly dogmatic.

And so, folks, is there a Bible verse in all the Bible that speaks clearly about birth control. There is not. Now, some people will argue and say there is. Let me tell you the verse that they typically argue from. "Judah took a wife for Er, his firstborn, and her name was Tamar. But Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord put Him to death. Then Judah said to Onan, (Onan was Er's brother) Go into your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her and raise up offspring for your brother. But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his, so whenever he went in to his brother's wife, he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. And what he did was wicked in the sight of the Lord and the Lord put him to death."

So people look at that and they say see? That's a form of birth control and God put him to death. But look, God doesn't say that the sin of Onan was birth control. There was a law in Israel. Listen to what the law said: Deuteronomy 25:5 "If brothers dwell together and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her, and the first son whom she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother that his name may not be blotted out of Israel."

Folks, as far as birth control is concerned, the Bible nowhere seems to forbid it, neither does it endorse it, by the way. But that text right there is not saying that Onan committed birth control and God killed him. The problem was that Onan knew that the firstborn child would not be his own. It would be his brothers. That's why he didn't want to do it. God killed him because he wickedly refused to do what was a law in Israel to be done. What a brother should have done to

another brother. But here, I want to tell you what the Bible does say. The Bible says that you are not to commit murder.

Listen to me. If any member of our church uses a form of birth control that is abortive in nature and I were to find that out, and they were not to repent of that immediately, they would be disciplined out of the church promptly. If you are using any sort of birth control, whether it's the pill or anything else, and I suggest you do the research. If you're going to use birth control, you have the obligation to live righteously before the Lord. And if you're using any type that possibly is abortive in nature, and what I mean is, there's a fertilized egg that is being put to death, you are committing murder. And be certain of it. That is forbidden. And I can be dogmatic about that. You are not to use abortive techniques in birth control. That is totally ruled out of Scripture.

What else can I tell you dogmatically? I can tell you this. Children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate. I'll tell you this, having lots of children is a blessing. And I can tell you that dogmatically.

You know what else I can tell you? God opens the womb and closes the womb. And the Bible tells us that. And you think, you're just going to control this thing, and you're going to go on birth control at this time, and then you're going to get off of it, and then you're going to have your family. Let me tell you. God opens the womb. And just because you're trying to structure that, don't think that it lies in your power to make that happen. There's no guarantees you're going to have a baby when you want to have a baby. And, by the way, there's no guarantee that the birth control that you use may not be the reason you don't have children. Because birth control can mess ladies up. But that's something that you guys would want to research as well.

Some other things I can tell you dogmatically. God says be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth. Be fruitful and multiply. Is that a forbidding of birth control? Not necessarily. No more than it's a forbidding of singleness. Right? Be fruitful and multiply... you might look at it and say, well then, we should be married, because you can't be fruitful and multiply, at least not in God's appointed means unless I'm married. And yet, we know singleness is advocated in Scripture. So that isn't necessarily a dogmatic command either. But here's a text to consider on the other side. 1 Timothy 5:8, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, especially for the members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." Is there wisdom in dictating and determining and planning how many kids you're going to have? And trying to do it in a way that you can support your family? Obviously. Supporting the family is a very important thing. And so, that is another consideration.

Bottom line, and this is how I'm going to end this one, Romans 14:23 "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Let me tell you this. Every one of you has a responsibility to walk before God in faith. And that means that you are living a life the way you believe God would have you to do it. Not

the way your friend thinks you ought to do it. Not the way your wife's girlfriend thinks you ought to do it. Not the way mom and dad think you need to do it. Bottom line is, you all have a responsibility to walk before God in faith. And that means believing that the path you're taking is the one that is most pleasing to Him. And if you are not convinced that any form of birth control is something that would please God, then you're in sin if you're walking that path, when you don't think you ought to be. Folks, you need to have a clear conscience before the Lord in anything you allow.