



# Twelve 12 Ministries

**A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE TO  
TALKING WITH YOUR DOCTOR,  
OB/GYN, OR FERTILITY SPECIALISTS**

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# The Five Steps

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Clarify your  
boundaries

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Know what the  
evaluation might entail

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Know what treatments  
might be offered

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# Clarify your boundaries

## 01 WITH SELF AND AS A COUPLE

Views can change, but having some sense of what feels God-honoring and morally acceptable before beginning a journey of evaluation and medical treatment can help you to avoid blind acceptance of treatments that cross your boundaries.

## 02 PERHAPS WITH YOUR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY OR LEADER

## 03 WITH YOUR DOCTOR

It is important that you feel heard and respected in your religious views and value system.

# Know what the evaluation might entail

## Couples facing struggles to conceive

- **Hormonal evaluation** – Only requires blood testing, sometimes at a certain time of the monthly cycle
- **Tubal assessment** – Usually done with a hysterosalpingogram (HSG), a GYN exam with an X-ray.
- **Uterine assessment** – Not always required, but an ultrasound can identify problems like fibroids and polyps.
- **Semen analysis** – This can be a challenging thing for some men of faith, as it often involves masturbation in a room with available pornography. If this creates struggles with lust, please know you can ask your doctor for other options such as specimen collection at home or done together with your wife, such as with the use of a specially designed collection condom.

## Couples facing struggles with pregnancy loss

- **Hormonal evaluation** – Only requires blood test
- **Autoimmune assessment** – Only requires blood testing
- **Genetic evaluation** – Often is merely blood testing
- **Uterine assessment** – Not always required, but an ultrasound can identify abnormalities in the shape of the uterus

# Know what treatments might be offered

## **LIFESTYLE CHANGES**

Issues like nutrition and tobacco use can have a big impact on fertility.

## **MEDICATIONS**

Your doctor might prescribe a medication to correct a hormone imbalance, reduce a blood clot risk, to regulate the period, or to cause ovulation, among other things. These are rarely a source of moral concern.

## **SURGERIES**

Problems with the Fallopian tubes and uterus can sometimes be corrected with procedures or surgeries, as can ovarian cysts and endometriosis.

## **UROLOGY EVALUATION FOR THE HUSBAND**

Some causes of male factor infertility can be improved via a urologist's interventions, such as medication or surgery for the purposes of increasing available sperm.

## **IUI (AKA ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION)**

This can help couples who have mild male factor infertility or unexplained infertility. It is generally acceptable in most faith traditions but raises some concerns for Catholics and some Orthodox traditions.





## IVF (in vitro fertilization)

This is a more complicated process where the eggs are taken out of the body and put together with partner’s sperm in a laboratory. This process is particularly suited for couples with tubal or male factors, but also offers the advantage of generally better success rates than any other approach for almost any infertility diagnosis. Some of the concerns Christians might have with this treatment approach include: a) greater deviation from God’s design for the beginnings of life (e.g. the Catholic concerns about separation of “the unitive and the procreative” aspects of intercourse); b) concerns for creating more embryos than number of children desired; and c) concerns about the freezing of embryos. IVF can be practiced in ways that minimize or eliminate the concerns from point B&C, so this should be discussed with your doctor if it is an area of concern for you.

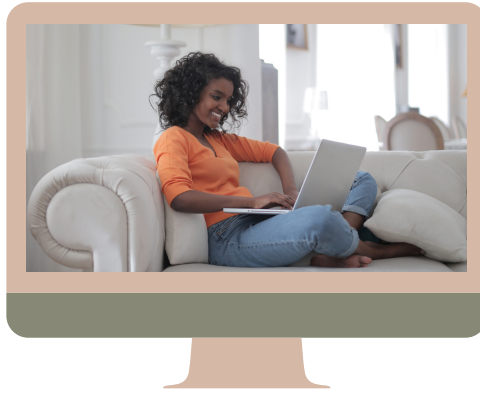
## IVF with genetic testing

IVF offers an opportunity for identifying embryos at higher risk of genetic problems before the pregnancy begins. This can be done to improve the chance of success, reduce the chance of miscarriage, and to reduce the chance of a lethal or debilitating disease, among other reasons. Christians may have concerns about the destruction of embryos with concern for genetic abnormalities, both because of the embryo destruction aspect and the intent to be selective about which embryos will or will not be allowed to start a pregnancy.

## “Third-party” reproduction

This is a term used to encompass IUI or IVF where the sperm, egg, embryo, and/or uterus are not only from the intended parents. This includes the use of donor sperm, donor eggs, donor embryos, and/or a gestational carrier (“surrogate”). This might be recommended if the woman has no or few eggs (or if the eggs are deemed to be of poor quality/low chance of success), if the man has no sperm, or if the intended mother has a medical contraindication to pregnancy or an uncorrectable uterine issue. Christian values around this issue are less obvious and more individualized. For instance, the use of donor embryos has been embraced by many Christians (even those who are not infertile) as a way to give an “extra” embryo from another couple an opportunity at life, giving it the term “embryo adoption.” The use of donor eggs and sperm do not have an obvious theological framework to guide them, although some have looked at the Old Testament example of Levirate marriage (Deut 25:5-10) as a related example and thus viewed these approaches as permissible. However, the social/relational aspects of such a conception may change the permissibility (for instance, the use of donor eggs or donor sperm to allow pregnancy in a nontraditional family model / one which does not include a married husband and wife).

# Beyond The Meeting



## T12 COMMUNITY

An online infertility support group sharing hope and God's love through community, events and resources.

[ACCESS HERE](#)

## BIBLE STUDY

An 8-Session Bible Study on Hope where you can find growth in the dry places of your life so that you can courageously trust in God's perfect timing.

[ACCESS HERE](#)



## PODCAST

The Purpose Beyond Motherhood Podcast. Find your God-given purpose beyond infertility and motherhood. A weekly podcast discussing the good, the bad, and ugly about infertility and life.

[ACCESS HERE](#)



## MENTORSHIP

Searching for someone that will pray for you, encourage you and walk with you on your infertility journey? If you are, let's pair you with a mentor! Fill out the form below to get connected today.

[ACCESS HERE](#)







# goals

GOAL

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

GOAL

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

GOAL

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

# to do

## ACTION STEPS / PRIORITY TASKS

1.

2.

3.



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# my week

mon

tue

wed

thu

fri

sat

sun

Date:

priorities

to do

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**'Be joyful in hope, patient  
in affliction, faithful in  
prayer.'**

**Romans 12:12**





# W E A R E 1 2 1 2