Wednesday Word

Inside Stories and Regrets from Ex-IVF Doctors and IVF Parents

Education: IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) is heralded as the way to help infertile couples to have a child. And it does often work – the two moms in this video from Life Action both have 2 children created through IVF. But what they said over and over was that no one told them the whole story. They did not know that there were other very reasonable options to try, that would actually diagnose and hopefully fix the problem, rather than replacing the natural function of the body with surgical and laboratory procedures. They were not told to think about the fact that they would be faced with hard decisions about what to do with 5 or 10 "extra" embryos. They didn't realize that seeing the monthly bill for cryogenic preservation of frozen embryos would constantly remind them of their children who existed in storage. They didn't think about how they would have to tell their children that they were created in a lab, that several other children were also created who either died or were frozen or were possibly adopted by another family. They did know that after talking to the doctor and the nurse, the next step at the clinic was to talk to the financial advisor, about how to borrow the money to pay for the procedure.

One of the doctors expressed that rather than just helping infertile couples to have their own babies, they would see couples who just wanted a boy, or used donor eggs or sperm, and possibly surrogate mothers. She saw the technological environment of the lab, focused on the procedure and the numbers, and not on the existence of human life. As she grew spiritually, she knew she should not be involved in IVF. She should not be "playing God" and making life-and-death decisions about other people's lives.

The other doctor described being disturbed by various issues, but had a definite "final straw" to force him to leave the practice. He had a patient who did not want her extra embryos to be frozen. He objected but was basically forced to go along with the patient's wishes and watched the embryos continue to develop in culture for a few more days before they died.

The hour-long video of the conversation between two doctors and two IVF moms, along with several other "Face to Face" videos can be viewed from Face to Face | Live Action.

Prayer: Dear Father God, please have mercy on couples who are struggling with the cross of infertility. Help them to first of all pray about what you would have them do, rather than depending on themselves to fulfill their desire to have children. Bring them information about restorative reproduction medicine, to allow the problem to be diagnosed and corrected, respecting life at every stage. If they are unable to conceive through those methods, help them to accept adoption as a loving way to complete their family. Have mercy as well on those involved in the IVF industry. Open their eyes and hearts to see the embryos as children who deserve nurturing and care, rather than being discarded, used for research, or subjected to the hostile environment of a freezer. Amen.

Action: When you hear about someone struggling with infertility and possibly considering IVF, let them know that there are other options that are both more effective and less expensive than IVF. Encourage them to listen to moms who have gone through the procedure and have regrets. How they expressed that no one discussed other options to any serious extent, or encouraged them to think about the hard decisions they would have to make about "extra" embryos.