

"Teen Pregnancy"

Dear Antwort Mann,

I am a 16 year old girl and most of the girls I know are talking a lot about getting pregnant. They don't care about the marriage part - they just want to get pregnant and have a baby to love them and they can love back. I don't think this is a good idea, but I'm not sure how to convince them of that. Can you give some reasons why they shouldn't get pregnant at so young an age and without being married? Maybe you can save some girl a lot of heartache.

Signed, "Really Worried About My Friends"

Dear "Worried",

God bless you for having the maturity to see the problem here. May God keep you faithful to these values until you are married and able to properly give birth and raise children of your own. Most teenagers, especially in this media age of "Jersey Shore" and "Pregnant and Unwed" have a hard time seeing beyond the present. Kids and adults alike are living for immediate gratification without regard to future problems or costs. Unfortunately this attitude is causing a lot of heartache for multitudes of people, as well as society in general for years to come. Here are a few points for your friends to consider. Obviously, these comments are for the young girl thinking about getting pregnant, not the one who is pregnant already, or is considering an abortion. That's a whole different subject altogether.

1. A baby is not a puppy or a kitten. While children are a gift of God, they are a whole lot of work, and can be very frustrating. A child raising a child only makes the problem worse.
2. How are you going to raise the child while you're still in high school and don't have a job-or at least, one that pays enough?
3. How is having a baby going to help your social life? Will the guys who date you do so because you've already had sex (thus, a baby) and they think you'll have sex with them?
4. Is it right to expect your parents to take responsibility to raise your child while you go to school, have dates, go out with your friends, etc.? If you have a baby, what makes you think you'll have time to do most of those things?
5. Is it fair to force me, and all other hardworking taxpayers to support you for your selfish and irresponsible choices? Why should we pay your medical bills, housing and food and all other associated costs for having a child that you weren't prepared to properly provide and care for yourself? Is it fair to put that extra financial, emotional, and physical burden on your parents?
6. Do you really expect the father of your child, who is likely as young as you, to stick by you and help you raise this child? Really? Are you honestly prepared to do this on your own?
7. Do you think seriously that God doesn't care that you are breaking His Commandments?

The fact of the matter is: when a husband and wife have a child, it is a selfless act of love, and provides the proper environment in which the child can grow and prosper. Both parents can support each other as they raise that child together. An unwed, teenaged girl having a baby is the ultimate in self-centeredness: first, by engaging in sex outside of marriage, and secondly by wanting a child the way one would want a pet. All too often, the burden of caring for and providing for that child (like what happens to pets) fall on others when the child loses interest. That is not right. Statistics show that many young, unwed teen mothers often never finish high school or go to college. They work at low paying jobs and require welfare. They are prone to remain in poverty throughout their lives. Often they end up without husbands, or live with abusive boyfriends. And many children raised without a loving father and husband to their mothers will become angry, use drugs, and get into trouble with the law.

While many girls do eventually mature and are good moms to their children, they live harder lives filled with regrets and unfulfilled dreams, simply because they engaged in very adult activities without the maturity and forethought necessary to prepare them for such an awesome responsibility and privilege as that of being a parent.

Let me make this clear: If you are not married, you should NOT be having sex, whatever your age. And you shouldn't be trying to get pregnant. It's wrong, and it's a sin against God, yourself, and the child you may have. That child will need both parents, and both parents will need each other to properly and fully raise this child in the way God intended when He created male and female and instituted marriage.

While it is true that Christ died for all sins, and forgiveness is available for all who repent and trust in Him, it doesn't follow that because we are forgiven all the bad consequences for our decisions will go away in this life. We may still have to live with the results of what we have done, even while having the confident assurance of forgiveness and eternal life in Christ.

I know you can find exceptions to some of the things I have written here, but God designed sex, marriage, and childbearing to be kept within certain limits, that really are for our benefit. Maybe some teenage, unwed girls have the "perfect life" with their child, but are you really willing to take the chance that you'll be one of them? I pray not - for your sake, your parents' sake, society's sake, and for the sake of the child you might have.

"The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age". Titus 2:11-12