

# I Didn't Think It Would Happen to Me

From BJ McMichael, STW Church-Family Minister

Whether you are married or not, experiencing an unexpected pregnancy can be overwhelming. Shock, joy, anger, and embarrassment are pretty common reactions. Relationships will change. Plans for the future will change. Employment and finances will change. Your body will change.

When pregnancy occurs outside of marriage, another layer of complications frequently arise. Questions of custody, name, living arrangements, and future can complicate an already challenging situation. Also hanging out there as a decision, is whether or not to even allow the pregnancy to continue. You need to know that others have faced this dilemma. As you thoughtfully consider your next steps, there is wisdom, acceptance, and support available to you. Some support may be less obvious, but it is here and this church wants to walk with you as a faithful companion. The next decisions you make are important and consequential, and deserve intense prayer and thoughtful consideration. What should you consider as you try to decide the best options for both you and this new life?

## CONSIDERATION #1: The Gift of Life

Every human life has value regardless of the circumstances. That goes for you and your baby. You were both created in the image of God and were fearfully and wonderfully made. All of your days were written in God's book before one of them came to be (Psalm 139:13-16). Even though you don't know your future or the future of this baby's life, your decisions affect both. Pray that God will help you make choices that preserve His best for both of you - to allow you both to experience the full life He offers. As Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

## CONSIDERATION #2: The Responsibilities Ahead

Raising a child is hard; raising a child on your own is harder. Making or hastening a decision to marry after news of a pregnancy introduces complications. Choosing to terminate a pregnancy carries physical, emotional, and spiritual consequences. Weighing all the possibilities and deciding to offer a child for adoption can be heart wrenching, as well. So "No, there are no easy choices at this point." However, there is always hope!!

To a people in exile and distress, God sent this message of hope through the prophet Jeremiah:

*"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."* Jeremiah 29:11-13.

## CONSIDERATION #3: The Hope of Reconciliation

God is in the business of turning situations that feel like a mess and using them to grow his people into stronger and more mature people. God can do this with an unexpected pregnancy. It is possible you will find strengths and resources you didn't know you had. It is also likely that you will find deficits within yourself and within those around you, that will disappoint you and make a difficult path that much harder. Despair, delay, and inaction are not your friends. You need to talk to some wise people you trust. You will likely need to swallow some pride, and make choices that are in the best interest of others even when they don't seem to be in your own best interest. You cannot be selfish. In fact, being a parent means learning to lay down your life as a servant for your child (Philippians 2:3-7). If you are not ready to lay down your life, there are couples and families who are. If you accept the responsibility, the laying down your life begins before the child is ever born, as you submit to your child and take care of yourself for their benefit. The laying down continues after they are born, as you submit to their schedule and needs. Let us walk with you as you think and pray through this situation.

## GOING FURTHER – Resources

**Recommended Book** (available at STW church of Christ- TheWELL):

*I'm Pregnant- Now What?* (by Ruth Graham) The daughter of evangelist Billy Graham speaks from her experience helping two daughters through teenage pregnancies. Co-author, Sara Dormon, Ph.D., brings a broad range of insights to help women come up with an informed, workable plan for getting through an unplanned pregnancy.

### **Recommended Websites:**

*OptionLine.org* offers trained consultants who can provide direction, as well as connections to local pregnancy centers staffed to give you Biblical and confidential care.

*CrisisPregnancy.com* offers an exhaustive collections of articles and links regarding your pregnancy, adoption issues, and support for each step.

<https://www.charismamag.com/life/family-parenting/100047-coping-with-an-unplanned-pregnancy> talks about a mom coping with her teenage daughter's pregnancy.

*Bravelove.org* has more videos and resources about the pro-adoption movement dedicated to changing the perception of adoption by acknowledging birth moms for their brave decision.



I Didn't Think It  
Would Happen To  
Me