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# A Christian Ethical Perspective on Surrogacy

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*Presence Health*

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# A Christian Ethical Perspective on Surrogacy

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## About the Author(s)

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## Abstract

Infertility is a painful reality for many couples. Assisted reproductive technologies (A.R.T.) are becoming increasingly more popular for infertile couples desperate to conceive. In 1972 physician and ethicist Leon Kass warned that “infertility is a relationship as much as a condition – a relationship between husband and wife, and also between generations too. More is involved than the interests of any single individual”. Yet, most Christians have been reticent in asking what boundaries or principles need to be drawn. A recent Pew Research study found Americans, including evangelical Christians, largely do not see *in vitro* fertilization and surrogacy as a moral issue and thus do not take a position for or against it.

The lack of a moral or ethical compass is one of the results of our postmodern culture. Many people would admit to having no external criteria for judging their beliefs. Most people have default values – a series of values that minimize the friction between personal spiritual inclination, personal emotional preferences, cultural expectations and relational pressures. Default values are flexible values because the person’s needs and preferences can change with each shift in the context of life.

Empathy should be felt for the anguish experienced by infertile couples. However, in addressing the desires of infertile couples, society should not undermine fundamental family relationships of the natural mother, parental responsibilities and the long term interest of children. Surrogacy risks blurring the child’s identity, disrupts the natural links between marriage, conception, gestation, birth and the rearing of the child. Adults involved in surrogacy should not behave as though they alone are involved. An individualistic concept of autonomy and reproductive freedom overlooks the rights of the child who is easily treated as an impersonal object. This article will attempt to provide a Christian ethical perspective on one option of assisted reproductive techniques which is becoming increasingly popular, surrogacy.

## Keywords

Surrogacy, IVF, infertility, snowflake adoption, assisted reproductive technologies, ART, procreation, conception, Christian ethics, morality of surrogacy

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## A Christian Ethical Perspective on Surrogacy

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### Introduction:

Infertility is a painful reality for many couples. However, assisted reproductive technologies (A.R.T.) are becoming increasingly more popular for infertile couples desperate to conceive. In 1972, physician and ethicist, Leon Kass warned that “infertility is a relationship as much as a condition – a relationship between husband and wife, and also between generations. More is involved than the interests of any single individual”.<sup>i</sup> Yet, most Christians have been reticent in asking what boundaries or principles need to be drawn. A recent Pew Research study found Americans, including evangelical Christians, largely do not see *in vitro* fertilization and surrogacy as a moral issue and thus do not take a position for or against it.<sup>ii</sup> This article will attempt to provide a Christian ethical perspective on one option of assisted reproductive techniques which is becoming increasingly popular, surrogacy.

The term surrogacy or surrogate originates from the Latin word which means substitute. In the medical vernacular, the term surrogacy means using a substitute mother in the place of the natural mother. In other words, surrogacy is the reproductive practice in which a woman bears a child for another woman, and after birth, surrenders any parental claims to the child. It is probable that surrogacy has been employed through the ages to help women who are unable to bear children, themselves, to have families. However, until the late seventies no specific incidences are recorded in texts recounting medical history.

The earliest example of “surrogacy” is in the Old Testament (Genesis 16:1-15). The story is told, “Now Sarai, Abram’s wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; so she said to Abram, ‘The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her.’” Abram did as he was told, and, at the age of 90 years, he was able to father a child by Hagar, and Ishmael was born.

Surrogacy is divided into two categories: traditional and gestational. In traditional surrogacy, the surrogate carrier is inseminated with the semen of the husband of the ‘commissioning couple’. While the semen is usually from the intended father, it could also be from a donor. As a result, in a traditional surrogacy the surrogate carrier is genetically related to the resulting child. Usually, the intended father’s name is put directly on the birth certificate but the intended mother would need to do a step-parent adoption.

In gestational surrogacy, the surrogate mother is not genetically related to the child. Eggs are extracted from the intended mother or egg donor and mixed with sperm from the intended father or sperm donor *in vitro*. The embryos are then transferred into the surrogate’s uterus. Embryos which are not transferred may be frozen and used for transfer at a later time if the first transfer does not result in pregnancy. With gestational surrogacy there are several options:

- *Gestational surrogacy with intended embryo (GS/IE)* – A surrogate is implanted with an embryo created by IVF, using intended father’s sperm and intended mother’s egg. The resulting child is genetically related to intended father and mother and genetically unrelated to the surrogate.

- *Gestational surrogacy and egg donation (GS/ED)* - A surrogate is implanted with an embryo created by IVF, using intended father's sperm and a donor egg. The resulting child is genetically related to intended father and genetically unrelated to the surrogate.
- *Gestational surrogacy and donor sperm (GS/DS)* - A surrogate is implanted with an embryo created by IVF, using intended mother's egg and donor sperm. The resulting child is genetically related to intended mother and genetically unrelated to the surrogate.
- *Gestational surrogacy and donor embryo (GS/DE)* - A donor embryo (resulting from a donor sperm and a donor egg) is implanted in a surrogate; such embryos may be available when others undergoing IVF have embryos left over, which they opt to donate to others. The resulting child is genetically unrelated to the intended parent(s) and genetically unrelated to the surrogate.

Until the introduction of modern assisted reproductive technologies, traditional surrogacy was the only method available to women to enable them have their own genetic children. Gestational surrogacy is increasingly more popular than traditional surrogacy because it allows an infertile couple the chance to have a child who is genetically related to both the male and the female parent.<sup>iii</sup> According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, more than a 1,000 children were born through surrogacy in 2011. That number indicates an almost 100 percent increase from the 530 babies reported born in 2004.<sup>iv</sup>

Surrogacy is further divided into commercial and altruistic surrogacy. In the commercial version, the surrogate offers her services in exchange for money, or some other form of payment. In the altruistic version, the surrogate voluntarily agrees to carry the baby, but not for payment. While there are specific harms that befall one version but not the other, both are subject to the family of arguments claiming that surrogacy is harmful.<sup>v</sup>

However, surrogacy has always been surrounded by controversy. While the controversy has perhaps diminished slightly in recent years because of the widespread increase, many of the ethical issues associated with surrogacy remain unsolved. That so many people fail to consider the moral implications of assisted reproductive technologies suggests that in the age of fertility treatments, *in vitro* fertilization and surrogacy, a woman's womb has come to be seen as a somewhat arbitrary. However, God insists that what happens in utero matters and cannot be casually or disrespectfully dismissed. The womb, where God first knits us together (Ps. 139:13-14), is not an arbitrary place for a child to grow and develop. Christians haven't done the hard work of thinking biblically about infertility or about new reproductive technologies such as IVF, sperm and egg donation, and specifically, surrogacy. When it comes to surrogacy, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* is here, and can't be disregarded any longer.

### Summary of Various Ethical Positions on Surrogacy:

In the assessment of this author, there are at least four major ethical positions taken as to the morality of surrogacy. Please note these are summaries of the major ethical positions. A fuller discussion on ethical principles will follow which should be considered in evaluating these ethical positions. Because surrogacy utilizes A.R.T. (artificial reproductive technologies); many of these positions may apply to *in vitro* fertilization also. The first position rejects outright surrogacy in any form or method. This Conservative Ethic, is the polar opposite of the Permissive Ethic. Each of these positions takes an extreme ethical view while the Modified Permissive Ethic attempts to take a middle ground. The last position taken on surrogacy, Adoptive Surrogacy, is more of a response to the number unclaimed embryos. Respecting the

personhood of embryos, embryo adoption does not create new life but rescues children who have been orphaned

The Conservative Ethic espouses the standard that procreation must be reserved to the unity of married spouses within the intimacy of conjugal acts. In order to preserve their dignity and personal nature, children should have a fully human origin. In other words, it is ethically unacceptable to separate procreation from the integrally personal context of the conjugal act between a husband and wife.

The Conservative Ethics advocates that any surrogacy, because the process utilizes A.R.T., takes the beginning of life out of the warmth and darkness of the maternal body to the sterile and cold environment of medical laboratory. It abolishes the intimacy of a husband and wife by substituting them with the medical staff. During the sacred moment of conception, the parents are not even present. The child is manufactured by lab technicians and doctors or in the case of traditional surrogacy, the woman is *artificially* inseminated. Therefore, surrogacy, in any manner, is immoral.

The Permissive Ethic, on the other hand, says that as long as due process and informed consent by informed adults is guided by proper contracts, any surrogacy is permissible. In the name of individual liberties/rights and autonomy, any adult should be able to contract with any other individual and use any alternative reproductive procedure in order to produce a child. Thus surrogacy, in any manner, is moral/ ethical. The burden of proof of the immorality of surrogacy supposedly lies with those who would limit surrogacy.

The Modified Permissive Ethic recognizes that procreation must be reserved only to heterosexual couples within a marriage relationship. This ethic attempts to negotiate a middle ground by allowing for surrogacy in a limited fashion. This moral standard would permit gestational surrogacy by a third party individual provided the egg is supplied by the wife and is fertilized *in vitro* with the husband's sperm. (i.e. - Gestational surrogacy with intended embryo (GS/IE); and, as long as due process and informed consent by informed adults is guided by proper contracts. The embryo is transferred into the uterus of the surrogate mother who then would gestate the child. The Modified Permissive Ethic attempts to recognize the importance of genetic and psychological relationship of a child and his/her parents.

Some have proposed another ethical option for married infertile couples - Adoptive Surrogacy. Proponents of this ethical position believe that Christians should not give primary or ultimate loyalty to biological lineage of procreation. (cf. Barth's discussion: *Parents and Children*). As we have been adopted into the family of God, so must infertile couples consider their role in welcoming orphaned children. With the cost of gestational surrogacy reaching \$100,000, the focus for Christian stewardship must move away from an emphasis on the creating of life and acquiring of children to the sustenance of life and the care of children.

Adoptive surrogacy argues that historically, Christianity is unique. No other religion practices compassion for and care of the young, sick, orphaned, oppressed, and widowed. In many cultures throughout history, life was cheap. Infanticide was condoned and practiced for centuries and extolled. This ungodly practice was opposed by Christians. First-century art shows believers rescuing unwanted Roman babies from the Tiber River. Whereas pagans placed no value on infant life, Christians treated them as human beings. The early church viewed infanticide as the murder of a human being, not a convenient tool to rid society of unwanted children. A child, whether male, female, perfect, or imperfect, was created in the image of God and therefore had inherent value.

Therefore, couples who believe God has called them to welcome children into their home should consider two adoptive surrogacy options: traditional adoption and embryo/"snowflake" adoption. Adoption is a process whereby a person assumes the parenting of another, usually a child, from the child's biological or legal parent or parents. Adoption permanently transfers all rights and responsibilities, along with filiation, from the biological parent(s) to the adoptive parent(s).

Rather than adopting a child who has already emerged from her mother's womb, embryo adoption allows the adopting family to begin the adoption journey nine months earlier with pregnancy and childbirth. It is commonly reported that there are over 600,000 of these healthy, viable embryos in the United States. In the Adoptive Surrogacy perspective, producing embryos via IVF is ethically questionable, and should be opposed. However, “snowflake” adoption values human life, respecting the personhood of embryos. Embryo adoption does not create new life but rescues children who have been orphaned. In welcoming children as God’s gifts, this ethical position argues that couples should seek to rescue all orphaned children whether they have been born or are frozen embryos.

### Ethical Principles to be Considered in Forming One’s View on Surrogacy:

The lack of a moral or ethical compass is one of the results of our postmodern culture. Many people would admit to having no external criteria for judging their beliefs. With no absolute criteria to be relied upon for discerning truth, that which is rational is often replaced by what is subjectively “pleasing.” This inner directed emphasis of “whatever is pleasing to me” coupled with the rampant relativism of no absolutes has fostered the myth of choices without consequences. People behave as if the relationship between behavioral choice and consequences has been detached.

Most people have default values – a series of values that minimize the friction between personal spiritual inclination, personal emotional preferences, cultural expectations and relational pressures. Default values are flexible values because the person’s needs and preferences can change with each shift in the context of life. Christians should resist reject default values and consider the moral implications of surrogacy in light of the following ethical principles.

#### 1. Embodiment Significance of Procreation

One of the foundations of a responsible ethic concerning sexuality is to see sexual acts as personal acts involving the whole person. Just as lust is wrong because it disregards the whole person and her human dignity, so surrogacy is immoral because it isolates and uses a person’s reproductive capacity apart from her personal life. The surrogate’s womb is thus commodified, reduced to the status of the animated tool of reproductive technologies – and “animated tool,” of course, was Aristotle’s definition of a slave.<sup>vi</sup>

Helena Ragoné’ cited three profound shifts in Western perception of conception, reproduction, and parenthood that are consequences of ART.

First, birth control and contraceptive methods led to the separation of intercourse from reproduction creating the foundations for surrogate motherhood. Second, the fact that sexual intercourse is no longer a precondition for pregnancy led to fragmentation of the unity of procreation. Third, ART undermines the organic unity of fetus and mother. Thus, overall, reproductive medicine has led to the fragmentation of motherhood as several different women may take part in the creation of one new life, contributing ovum, womb, or child care.<sup>vii</sup>

Surrogacy, as well as other artificial reproductive technologies, may have the tendency to treat a person as a mere components of tissues, organs, and functions instead as a whole person. Feminist Gena Corea, in quoting from a study of an Australian *in vitro* fertilization program, draws attention to the dehumanizing aspect of the treatment:

It (the IVF treatment) is embarrassing. You leave your pride on the hospital door when you walk in and pick it up when you leave. You feel like a piece of meat in the meat-works. But if you want a baby badly enough you'll do it.<sup>viii</sup>

Another noteworthy aspect of the embodiment significance of procreation is related to what the Vatican calls "the special nature of transmission of human life in marriage." Here the appeal is to a natural law conception because it not only separates procreation from sex but it also disembodies conception, gestation, birthing, and parenting. Surrogacy separates procreation from the integrally personal context of the conjugal act by putting the sacred moment of conception into the sterile and cold environment of a petri dish. The child is manufactured in a laboratory. Surrogacy creates a distance between natural events of procreation so that these events are no longer viewed as points along a continuum but as discrete occurrences that can be compartmentalized and separated from each other. These events cannot be separated without profound effect on the personhood of those involved and on the community's conception of personhood. "Gilbert Meilaender observes, as we remove the creation of new life further and further from the natural reality of male and female sexual union, children become our product, our project, or our possession."<sup>ix</sup>

## 2. Procreation in the Context of the Family

The scriptural directive is not simply procreation but procreation within the context of a family. Scripture states, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). The meaning of the term "one flesh" is not immediately obvious. It might well be understood in a figurative manner as referring to the coital union of male and female. However, Rashi, the classical eleventh-century biblical exegete, understands the term as a quite literal reference to a "single flesh," *viz.*, the child born of the union of man and wife. He comments, "The child is created by both and [in the child] their flesh becomes one."<sup>x</sup>

The scriptural reference is not to the simple mating of male and female for purposes of conception; that could readily be accomplished without either party leaving his or her parental domicile. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother" depicts a man's permanent abandonment of the parental home in anticipation of establishing a new marital domicile with the wife to whom he cleaves. The reference to family is quite obvious. Not only is there a reference to establishment of a new family for the purpose of conceiving and nurturing a child but there is a concomitant reference to leaving father and mother, *i.e.*, the parental in which the presence of the son signifies the existence of a family unity. Thus, Scripture explicitly portrays propagation of the species as the telos, of and hence the value reflected in, the family as an institution.

Surrogacy infringes on the child's right to be born of a father and mother known to him and bound to each other by marriage. According to the Alabama Law Review, in gestational surrogacy agreements, "there are at least three potential females who may claim maternal rights: the surrogate, the genetic donor, and the intended mother, with up to eight different potential parents in a gestational surrogacy contract."<sup>xi</sup> Surrogacy brings an inherent causal perspective on the conception diminishing the moral principle in which the marital commitment of the husband and wife establishes a family through becoming "one flesh".

An oft-quoted rabbinic dictum provides a basic ethical principle of the parental obligation parents have to the children to which they "give life". The Gemara says, "He who gives life gives sustenance" (Ta'anit 8b). This proverb is an affirmation of faith in the divine commitment to the human race. The resulting principle is that the one who bestows the gift of life undertakes the responsibility to provide the necessities of existence. Surrogacy, on the other hand, brings an inherent causal perspective on parental obligations

diminishing the moral principle of providing the necessities of existence to the children one gives the gift of life.

In bringing any child into the world, the parents put the child at risk of harm. The child is extremely disadvantaged and highly vulnerable to a vast range of physical and psychological injuries as the result of being born. Because they have exposed the child to that risk, the parents have at least a prima facie obligation to protect the child and to provide the necessities of life for the child. Furthermore, they may not transfer their parental duties to another caretaker simply as a matter of choice, for it is the child who holds the claim against both biological mother and father, and the child cannot release them.<sup>xii</sup> However, a surrogate mother does not assume personal responsibility for her momentous personal action of the gestation of a new life. In fact, the surrogate mother is to abdicate all future personal responsibility. “Parental responsibility is an essential form of the natural responsibility human beings have to help each other, and it gives rise to moral claims not governed by specific contracts or commitments.”<sup>xiii</sup>

### 3. Children as Cherished Gifts Not Commodities

The power of our technologies and the images they generate can turn children from persons to pets to consumable accessories, and each step is taken with our consent and approval (Shuman & Volck, pg. 762). However, Psalm 127:3 asks: “*Don’t you see that children are God’s best gift? The fruit of the womb His generous legacy?*” Wanting and welcoming children is a good thing, yet they are never “ours” in any real sense. Our care and responsibility for our children does not equal ownership. Children are “persons” whom God has given us the stewardship responsibility to welcome into our home in order to nurture and protect them as they develop into the person God created them to be. Surrogacy blurs the stewardship responsibility a parent inherently should have for their biological child. Consequently, the distinction between genetic, biological, and social parenthood has led to separating individuals involved by their different roles as multiple persons may take part in the process of creating and raising a new life. The contracts involved in the surrogacy relationship attempt to clarify these responsibilities but in reality only results in commodifying the child. Daniel S. McConchie in his article for The Center of Bioethics and Human Dignity, *An Ethical Perspective on Reproductive Technologies*, speaks to these problematic commercial arrangements: “Like the selling of organs, such arrangements wrongly commercialize the body. In fact, financial contracts essentially entail the purchasing the baby and imply an unacceptable form of ownership of human beings. Less problematic are altruistic surrogacies such as rescue surrogacies where a woman acts to save an embryo that would otherwise be destroyed.”<sup>xiv</sup>

Why should a child, at its very conception, be treated as property, a product, or a means to satisfy the wishes of self-serving adults? Some things are not to be commodified and commercialized. Verhey gives three warnings concerning the commodification of certain things:<sup>xv</sup>

- Sometimes what is good cannot remain quite the same good if commodified and commercialized. Commodification of procreation will distort, corrupt, and demean all those involved, especially the child.
- Commodification can corrupt community. Commodification can risk rupturing the fabric of the common life. If we do not block some exchanges, we may risk corrupting, demeaning, or distorting relations in community.
- Commodification can distort our rhetoric, the way we think of and talk of morality and ourselves.

Surrogacy, instead of welcoming children as a stewardship gift from God, commodifies them as a means to an end. In the words of one author,



Surrogate mother arrangements, of necessity, treat the creation of a person as the means to the gratification of the interests of others, rather than respect the child as an end in himself. The surrogate mother, by the very nature of the transaction, cannot make a pretense to valuing the child in and for himself, since she would not otherwise be creating the child but for the monetary and other . . . considerations (that) she receives under the surrogate mother contract.<sup>xvi</sup>

#### 4. The Psychological Relationship of the Child to its Parents:

In our culture a woman's womb has come to be viewed 'an easy-bake oven' for a gay couple that wants a child in the NBC comedy, *The New Normal*. When a Louisiana state senator introduced a law allowing for surrogacy, he described surrogacy as baking a loaf of bread in an oven. We have come to view women's reproductive organs as vessels to be used, sold, rented or loaned and thus have disrespected the personhood of the surrogate as well as the child.

Renowned marriage and family therapist Nancy Verrier, in her book *The Primal Wound*, writes about how mothers are biologically, hormonally, and emotionally programmed to bond with their babies *in utero* as well as at birth. A baby knows his mother at birth, and both the mother and the baby will experience grief at any separation at the time of birth. This primal wound is forever present.<sup>xvii</sup>

Everyone has a family history and relationships that belong to them as a person, beginning from their genetic origins. This history significantly affects our personal identity in having a relationship not only to our mother and father but also to our immediate and extended family. A report released by the Institute for American Values, "My Daddy's name is Donor: A New Study of Young Adults Conceived Through Sperm Donation," found "sixty-five percent of donor offspring agree, 'my sperm donor is half of who I am.' Similarly, it found that "'donor offspring are more likely to agree, 'I don't feel that anyone really understands me'".<sup>xviii</sup> Our genetic identity determines many of our traits and personal characteristics as does the nurturing, values, environment and up-bringing by our natural parents. Therefore, any method of procreation must respect the dignity of the personhood of the child.

Yes, it is true that some children are deprived of the knowledge and value of their genomic relationships, through no fault of their own. It is normal for adopted children to yearn to know their own biological parents. However, it is one thing to make provision for the adoption of children deprived of one or both of their natural parents because of death or divorce; it is quite another thing to make provision for systematically and deliberately engineering situations that result in children being conceived and born who will be unable to know one or both of their natural parents, and consequently be deprived of their love and care. To discount the importance of genetic parents is to underestimate their crucial role in maintaining our personal identities.

#### 5. The Argument from Old Testament Scripture and Jewish Law:

Leviticus 18 speaks to unlawful sexual relationships. Verses 6-19 presents a list of forbidden sexual partners. In each case the prohibition is understood as "not uncovering the sexual organ of . . ." (עֲרֹוּתָהּ) *ervat*: euphemistically rendered in most English translations as 'nakedness'). It is interesting that the very next verse, Leviticus 18:20, contains the prohibition against adultery which literally translated reads "And you shall not give your *semen* to your neighbor's wife for seed for defilement in her." Here the text shifts emphasis from the sexual act, defined as penetration, to deposit of semen. In his Commentary on the Bible, *ad locum*, Nahmanides, a thirteenth-century commentator and exegete, points to the variance in nomenclature.<sup>xix</sup>

In describing incest, Scripture dwells upon the carnal act itself. Jurists are aware that, in virtually all systems of law, the sexual act, whether in the context of rape, incest or the consummation of marriage, is defined as penetration rather than ejaculation. That is true in Jewish law as well and remains true even with regard to the prohibition against adultery. But, surprisingly, the language employed in Leviticus 18:20 (which is mistranslated in the standard English translations of the Bible) in the formulation of the prohibition against adultery speaks specifically of the deposit of semen in the genital tract of a married woman.

The question one must ask, “Is this a general prohibition against adultery?” or “Can this passage be applied as a prohibition of IVF and surrogacy?” While further research should be done by Old Testament scholars, one could argue that “verbal” inspiration is important concept in forming one’s opinion of this passage in view of surrogacy. Verbal inspiration has to do with the actual formation and use of the words themselves. It involves the employment within sentences of nouns, verbs, prepositions, articles, etc. This “verbal” concept of inspiration contends that the Spirit of God guided the writers, utilizing their individual talents and personalities, so that the very grammatical modes they employed were divinely orchestrated in order to convey subtle meanings of truth. The concept of “verbal inspiration” brings the issue into sharper focus. The “verbal” concept of inspiration would contend that in this passage, God, in His infinite wisdom, prohibits surrogacy as evidenced by the author use of specific words shifting emphasis from the sexual act, defined as penetration, to deposit of semen. Surrogacy provides for procreation outside the context of the marital union of a husband and his wife, by the insertion of another person’s “seed” into another woman’s uterus, and thus would be forbidden in this text.

## Conclusion

Careful consideration should be provided by those within the Christian community as to the morality of surrogacy, especially in light of the numerous associations backed by European and American personalities who are calling for the abolition of the baby business called euphemistically “surrogacy”. (The European Women’s Lobby (EWL), the Center for Bioethics and Culture (USA), the French Collectif pour le Respect de la Personne (CoRP), to name a few.)<sup>xx</sup> Other more conservative and evangelical groups have also spoken out against surrogacy. The Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention has made available an “Issue Analysis” on Surrogacy where they attempt to answer if surrogacy is ethical: “Almost all Christian bioethicists agree that most forms of surrogacy are theologically and morally problematic. The moral qualms generally concern the exploitation of women (e.g., “womb-renting”) the selling of children, the violation of the marital covenant, and the use of embryo-destructive reproductive technology.”<sup>xxi</sup>

Christians must not fail to consider the moral implications of surrogacy in this age of fertility treatments. Yet, empathy should be felt for the anguish experienced by infertile couples. However, in addressing the desires of infertile couples, society should not undermine fundamental family relationships of the natural mother, parental responsibilities and the long term interest of children. Surrogacy risks blurring the child’s identity, disrupts the natural links between marriage, conception, gestation, birth and the rearing of the child. Adults involved in surrogacy should not behave as though they alone are involved. An individualistic concept of autonomy and reproductive freedom overlooks the rights of the child who is easily treated as an impersonal object.

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- <sup>xviii</sup> Ibid., 20.
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